MUSIC CONNECTION

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MUSIC PUBLISHERS • 2023

The Basics of Mixing in ATMOS (PART 2)

What YOU Should Know About MUSIC PUBLISHING
By Kris Hawkins

Greta Van Fleet

Should You Arbitrate Your Dispute?
By Glenn Litwak, Esq.

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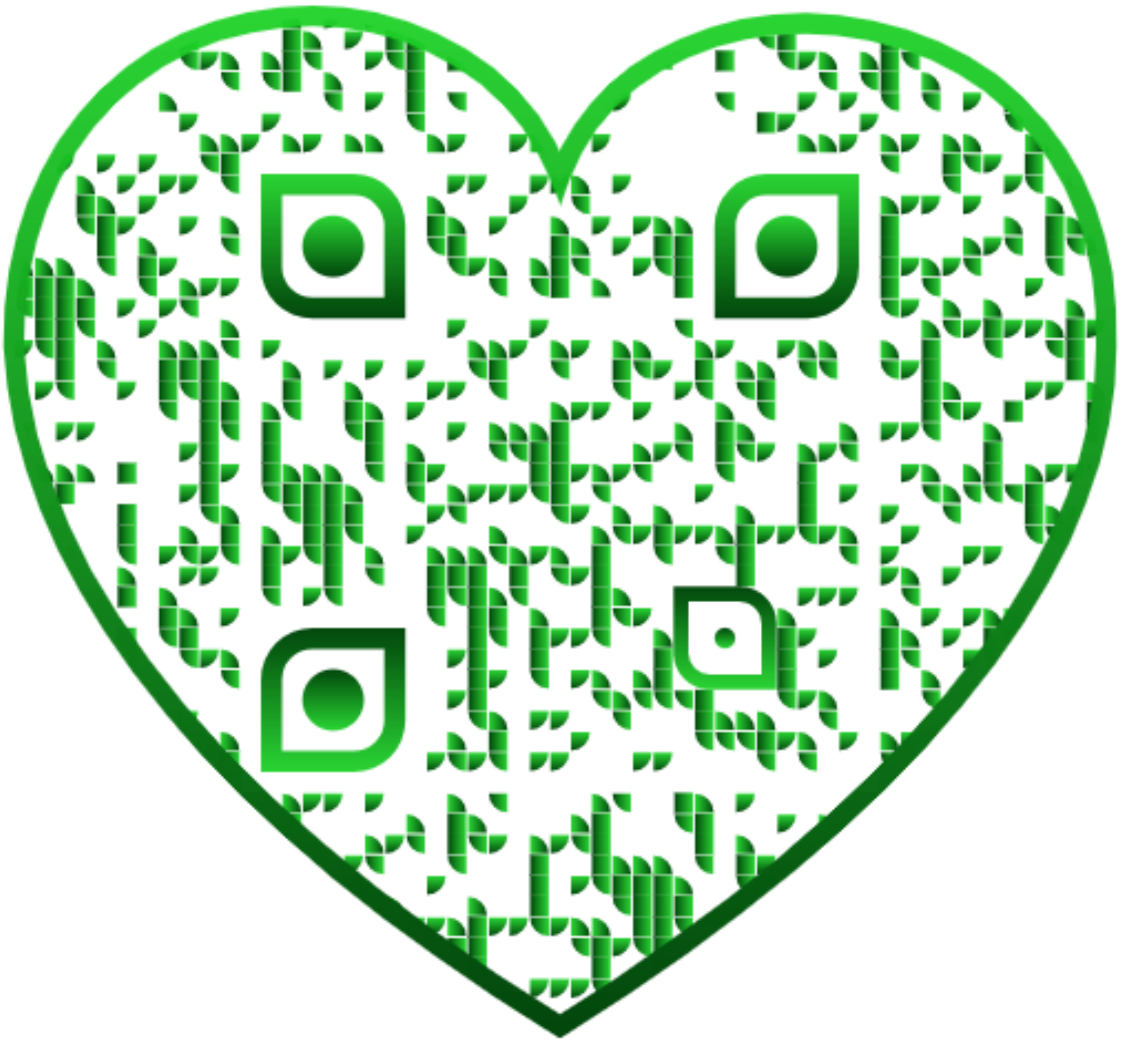

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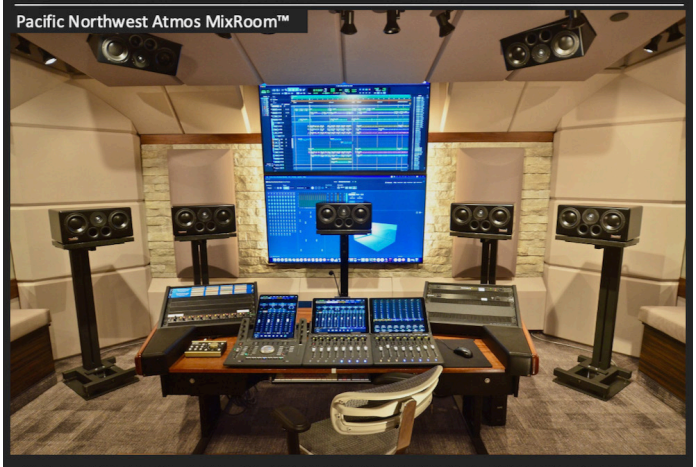

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BBE/G&L Guitars *glguitars.com / bbepedals.com*

Keeping the Fender Legacy Alive: In 1980, legendary instrument designer and inventor Leo Fender launched his final company, G&L, with George Fullerton. G&L's guitar designs leaned heavily upon the looks of Leo's original instruments while incorporating innovations such as enhanced tremolo systems and electronics. Before Leo passed away in 1991, he gave his blessing for his wife to sell the company to his friend John C. McLaren, Sr., owner of BBE Sound Inc.—a pioneer of audio improvement technologies for professional and consumer applications. Fulfilling his commitment as owner of G&L to expand and develop the company in a way that would please Leo, His sons Dave and Johnny McLaren continue to make instruments in Fender's historic factory on Fender Avenue in Fullerton, CA. Thanks to a special blend of traditional craftsmanship and pioneering technology, G&L instruments deliver unsurpassed performance and value. Leo's private workshop, the center of his creativity, remains at the heart of the large factory and has been visited by music folks from around the world.

Guitar and Bass Lines: G&L offers four essential guitar and bass lines—the Fullerton Deluxe, CLF Research and a Tribute Series. Created from the most popular and customer-requested models and options, the Fullerton Deluxe line is the heart of the American-made G&L experience. Inspired by Leo's legacy of continuous innovation, the CLF Research models take their styling cues from the inventor's vibrant era of the 80's while incorporating expanded technical capabilities. The G&L Tribute Series guitars and basses brings Fender's proprietary innovations to a popular price range, with core G&L features like Magnetic Field Design pickups. The G&L Custom Shop is where their ultimate instruments are crafted based on user's specialized needs.

BBE Pedals: Aside from the Fender products, BBE also offers a unique array of pedals. The BBE Sonic Stomp Pro is the next generation of the popular Sonic Maximizer in a compact pedal format. It has been re-engineered to offer musicians extended dynamic range. The BBE Green Screamer v2 is the next evolution of the classic "green" overdrive circuit, designed to yield greater transparency and versatility.

Artist Relations/ Business Development Manager Steve Araujo: Araujo's role at BBE/G&L Guitars grew out of The Bass Hang, his popular multi-media website and YouTube channel dedicated to supporting the bass playing community. He began working with the company producing video and other media. "As a veteran musician and certified music nerd," he says, "it's the ultimate honor to contribute in an environment dedicated to honoring and continuing his revolutionary work, on the premises where he designed so many classic instruments. We are as close to Leo's legacy and spirit as anyone can get."

Contact BBE/G&L Guitars, 714-897-6766

Casey Robison

Head of Publishing
Range Media Partners

Range Media Partners announced **Casey Robison** will join the company as the **head of its new music publishing division**. Robison will lead their publishing division that includes Sam Drake, Federico Morris, and Jared Cotter with support from the whole Range Media Partners team. Robison's experience as a builder at Big Deal and Hipgnosis is essential to getting the departments strategy and culture honed to ensure maximum opportunity for their roster of talent. For more, contact katej@grandstandhq.com.

Richard A. Pizante

Senior Vice President
Dick Clark Productions

Dick Clark Productions (DCP) announced PGA Award-nominated producer **Richard A. Pizante** as its new **SVP of Production**. With more than two decades of experience, Pizante will run the production department, overseeing physical production and protocols as well as budgeting of DCP's tentpole live events and other entertainment programming. For more information on this hiring, contact gsorial@dickclark.com.

Rachel Jacobson

Senior Vice President, Creative Sync
Warner Chappell Music

Warner Chappell Music announced the appointment of **Rachel Jacobson** to the newly created role of **Senior Vice President, Creative Sync**. Reporting to Rich Robinson, WCM's EVP, Global Sync and Media Original Music, Jacobson will oversee a new team that's solely focused on sourcing and developing songwriters for creative opportunities in sync, reimagining the creative side. For more, contact denise.schenasi@wmg.com.

Audrey Ensor

Marketing, Communications Manager
Eastern Acoustic Works

Eastern Acoustic Works (EAW) has hired **Audrey Ensor** to the position of **Marketing and Communications Manager**. In an effort to reintroduce EAW to the pro audio world, Ensor plans to help spread the brand story as a main componant by managing a range of content from channel communications, press materials and social media. With her previous roles as production coordinator, chief editor and executive director shes gained experience in leadership and team management. For more, contact emilyp@dpagan.com.

Bill Schulenburg

Director
AES

The Audio Engineering Society's Board of Governors (BoG) has elected **Bill Schulenburg** to assume the role of **AES Director**. Schulenburg has held various roles within the Society and will begin his second term as AES Vice President concurrently with his new role as Director. Schulenburg will replace outgoing Director Cesar Lamschtein (past VP Latin America Region and current chair of the Regions and Sections Committee). He will serve on the Board of Directors through 2025. For further info, contact kelly.reynolds@hq.aes.org.

Collen Mayer

CEO
The Store

The Store, a free-referral based grocery store co-founded by Brad Paisley and Kimberly Williams-Paisley, has brought on Collen Mayer as CEO. Mayer has years of leadership experience in the non-profit space having worked with Safe Haven Family Shelter, Catholic Charities of Tennessee and United Way of Central Alabama. With his history of serving the Nashville community Collen joined the team to lead their efforts to combat food insecurity ensuring that all neighbors have enough food to eat. For more info, contact jessie@schmidtpr.com.

Lindsay Brandt

VP, Marketing, Creative
Fantasy Records

Fantasy Records announced **Lindsay Brandt** has been appointed **VP of Marketing, Creative**. In this newly created position, Brandt will serve as Fantasy's in-house creative director and head of marketing with a focus on content development and digital strategy. The industry veteran's multi-faceted career includes extensive experience in management, festival production, art direction, photography, design, and label services. With her deep knowledge and passion for music, Brandt brings a unique set of skills to Fantasy. For more, contact melissa.simpson@fantasyrecordings.com.

Kelly Fair

National Sales Manager
Lectrosonics

Lectrosonics has announced the promotion of **Kelly Fair** to the position of **National Sales Manager** for the company. Fair will be heading up the U.S. sales team and its representatives, serving the company's diverse customer base in a variety of marketplaces, always with the goal of complete customer satisfaction. Kelly Fair previously served as Western Regional Sales Manager at Lectrosonics since joining the company eight years ago. For more information, contact margaret@msmediainc.com.

► BABY AUDIO TRANSIT

Transit is a plug-in that adds motion and synchronized (or random) events in a much less tedious way than using many plug-ins and a lot of very intense automation. Transit is a sound design engine with 18 different effect modules and a master Transition Control knob—a kind of master wet/dry knob for all effects at the same time.

There are seven slots of modules highlighted in yellow to chain in any order you want, and two of the same modules can be connected in series. Transit can get pretty complicated and, after spending an afternoon with it, I had saved many presets—actually variations of the included collection of over 300 presets mostly from co-designer/producer Andrew Huang.

Transit is for making any percussion, noises, musical notes, really anything sound like nothing I've ever heard before. After going through all the presets, I've saved my tweaked versions and named them as my favorites to be tried in my next mix. But the fact is I would not know which Transit patch or patches would work at a given moment on a particular instrument or vocal. That is the fun! Exploration!

I immediately got creative with the 18 effects and their many fully adjustable parameters. There are: AutoPan, BitCrusher, Chorus, Delay, Distortion, both 12dB and 24dB/octave filters, flanger, Noise Generator with resonance and a cutoff filter (my fav), synth oscillator with different waveform shapes, OTT is a three-band parametric equalizer, a phaser, pitch shift with both LFO Rate and Depth, then Pump, Reverb, Spread stereo widener, Tremolo, and a Utility module for changing Panning, Tone and Gain.

What a fantastic plug-in! I'll be using this on every mix and not just for all the wacky stuff it can do but also for all the beautifully subtle sounds possible, as well. Transit is compatible for both Macs, PCs and the new Mac M1 computers and sells for $99 MSRP.

babyaud.io/transit

◄ MARTIN D-15E 15 SERIES ACOUSTIC GUITAR

One of the four new models introduced for the summer, the Martin D-15E is a 14-fret (20 frets total) Dreadnought guitar made with sapele for the back and sides and, from India, a top made from an Indian Plantation mahogany. Body size is noted as D-14 Fret. The scale length is 25.4-inches and the fingerboard width at the nut is 1.75 inches.

Non-scalloped X-bracing inside the body will insure that this guitar is loud, bright but with a beautiful and unique presence that's hard to get from an acoustic guitar this size.

These qualities, along with Martin's E1 electronics, make this an all-around useful instrument for any music genre in either live or in-studio use. The new Martin D-15E 15 Series Acoustic Guitar sells for $1,299 MSRP.

martinguitar.com/11D15E.html

► SONY ELECTRONICS MDR-MV1 REFERENCE MONITOR HEADPHONES

Sony's new MDR-MV1 headphones are conceived, designed and built for professional music mixing. These are open-backed headphones capable of an extended frequency range of 5Hz to 80-kHz. Because of their high resolution and the internal design of the 1.58-inch driver units, they are perfectly suited for mixing and mastering in both conventional stereo and the new popular immersive sound formats.

I tried and compared the MDR-MV1 to other headphones around my studio and found them exceptionally lightweight and super-comfortable for wearing for long hours. They have ear pads that are very soft and the ear cups are made from aluminum not plastic. So, in the studio, dropping them or even stepping on them is not the end of the world! They fold up flat and are rated at 1.5-watts and with an impedance of 24-ohms will go louder than sensible! Sensitivity is 100dB/mW and I love the "un-hyped" sound of them! Flat response is a definite requirement for me.

The MDR-MV1 headphones include a high quality, detachable cable with machined aluminum connectors plus a 1/4-inch TRS stereo-to-1/8-inch mini-jack adapter for using them with phones and/or a laptop/tablet.

Rather than the adapter, I think Sony should include two cables like for using them in the studio and a second shorter cable to connect them to your phone. Adapters tend to be a "point of failure" over time and add more weight to the included 98-inch long cable.

When my singer used them to overdub her vocal, their sound tended to "leak" into the microphone, but in all fairness, she sings very quietly (requiring lots of mic gain) and is just inches from the mic.

Taking those concerns into account, the MDR-MV1 headphones just came out and works within Sony's new 360 Virtual Mixing Environment service and are the perfect way to start immersive mixing.

Sony Electronics MDR-MV1 Reference Monitor Headphones sell for $399 MSRP.

electronics.sony.com/audio/headphones/all-headphones/p/mdrmv1

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◄ TECH 21 FRANK BELLO STREET DRIVER 48 SIGNATURE SANSAMP

Long-time Tech 21 user Frank Bello finally has his weapon of choice: the SansAmp Street Driver 48 DI. He uses it for Anthrax and all his solo work. The Frank Bello Street Driver 48 features a Dirt switch for extra gain, overdrive, and a Filth switch for extra top-end sizzle. Controls include Drive for gain and overdrive, Low & High active EQ, and Output Level.

This SansAmp DI is voiced for Frank's needs and most importantly it was designed to be simple to operate. There are not a lot of knobs and switches or extra bells & whistles. He wanted players to be able to get a great sound fast: whether it's for metal or R&B or progressive Rock music, whether the player is a novice or expert, young or older.

Like all Tech 21 Signature SansAmps, the Frank Bello Street Driver 48 offers his core sounds and the versatility for many different styles. It runs on an included 9-VDC universal, auto-switching power supply with heavy-duty braided cord and interchangeable international plugs for use anywhere in the world.

Other features include: 1/4-inch and XLR Outputs, rugged all-metal housing. It measures 3.75"L x 4.75"W x 2.0"H.

tech21nyc.com/products/sansamp/streetdriver48

► NUGEN AUDIO ALIGNER PLUG-IN

The Aligner plug-in has an improved algorithm and will perfectly align both the phase and polarities of two (or more) mono or stereo audio signals easily and quickly.

Any recording engineer has probably experienced problems with multi-microphone recordings that, when mixing together, can sound weak and "phasey." Of course you may fix these problems manually in a time consuming process of visually sliding individual tracks ahead or behind in time. Sometimes the differences are initially imperceptible.

I tried Aligner on 15 recorded drum tracks of a drum kit that I did not record that sounded okay, but was terribly phasey and not at all mono-compatible.

Nugen Audio's Aligner measures time differences in samples between a selected reference track and the track(s) under scrutiny. I chose the kick drum mic (track) as my reference. Since each mic (track) is a different physical distance from the kick drum mic, they were all various low numbers of samples late in time. You can bypass all Aligner plug-ins all at once or only individual channels.

In the case of this first class-sounding drum recording, the difference with/without Aligner running was very slight but noticeable. The sound was fatter, more full range and you can use as many Aligner instances as you require.

I experimented with bypassing different channels and using a different channel as reference. Aligner features two kinds of bypass controls: one for all tracks at once and another for each individual channel. You can flip polarity and manually change the amount of delay.

I also aligned a distant room mic with a reference for a guitar sound. The room mic had a coloration I liked, but its delay times/distances were detrimental—Aligner captured the color and pulled that room mic closer in time.

Nugen Audio Aligner ver 1.1.0.6 (as tested in Pro Tools Ultimate) sells for $49 MSRP.

nugenaudio.com/aligner

◄ SSL B-SERIES DYNAMICS 500 MODULE

The SSL 4000 B was one of the first consoles ever manufactured by Solid State Logic to offer its 611B Dynamics module on every channel strip. This module offered a certain sonic "personality" and saturated compression style. The "look" of 24 to 100 channel strips with flashing green LEDs showing gates opening and closing and also red/yellow gain reduction LEDs is a fond memory of mine when I mixed music on those consoles.

The SSL B-Dyn is the single-channel 611B module from the SSL 4000B console that has been modified for use in a 500 series rack. It uses a VCA "feedback" design with a peak detector in the sidechain with an "over-easy" compression sound. The only new change is a switchable, very smooth 6dB/Oct 165Hz high-pass side-chain filter. Two adjacent modules will link together for stereo operation to prevent stereo image shifting when using a pair for any stereo instrument or the mix bus as I do all the time.

There are two LED stacks that provide complete monitoring of the Compressor/Limiter, De-Esser, and Gate/Expander functions of the B-Dyn module. Any of these functions can be used separately or in any combination.

The new SSL B-Dyn Dynamics 500 Module provides solid, reliable operation and is my first "go-to" utility compressor for its natural sound with strict control possible, if required. It sounds like no other hardware or software dynamics controller. It sells for $699 MSRP.

solidstatelogic.com/products/b-series-dynamics-module

BARRY RUDOLPH is a recording engineer/mixer who has worked on over 30 gold and platinum records. He has recorded and/or mixed Lynyrd Skynyrd, Hall & Oates, Pat Benatar, Rod Stewart, the Corrs and more. Barry has his own futuristic music mixing facility in North Hollywood called Tones 4 $ Studios. He is a lifetime Grammy-voting member of NARAS and a contributing editor for *Mix Magazine*. barryrudolph.com

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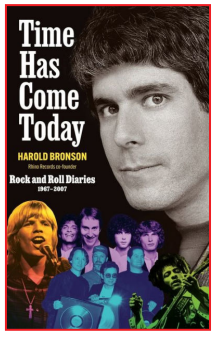
Time Has Come Today

By Harold Bronson

(hardcover) **$30.00**

Following his *The Rhino Records Story* (2013) and *My British Invasion* (2017), this 40-year diary documents Bronson's progress from student musician and journalist to label exec, where his fandom, wit and wildly creative imagination augmented and altered the course of many brilliant careers. *Time Has Come Today* contains accounts of significant events and meetings with noted hitmakers (The Monkees, George Carlin, even cookie king Wally Amos) and reveals fascinating details that have never before been made public.

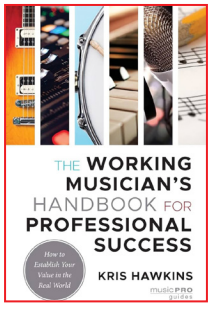


The Working Musician's Handbook for Professional Success

By Kris Hawkins

(paperback) **$28.98**

With over two decades of experience in the industry, Hawkins shares some of the insights that he has gained—successes as well as failures—in the hopes that you will learn from his missteps and triumphs. *The Working Musician's Handbook for Professional Success* focuses on real-life situations, including asserting your value, dealing with clients, protecting your work, treating your music as a business, financial management, finding work and networking.



Livin' On A Prayer: Big Songs, Big Life

By Desmond Child with David Ritz

(hardcover) **$28.99**

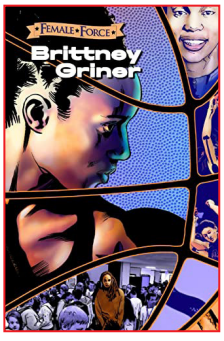
For over half a century, Desmond Child has collaborated with the world's most celebrated artists to create timeless hits, such as Bon Jovi's "Livin' On A Prayer" and "You Give Love A Bad Name" as well as Ricky Martin's "Livin' La Vida Loca" and "The Cup Of Life," among his vast catalog. But in *Livin' On A Prayer*, Child himself takes center stage to share his transformational story from misfit outsider to cultural pacesetter.

The Female Force Series

By Tidal Wave Productions

(paperback) **Prices vary**

Funny, imaginative, colorful, inspiring, and quite entertaining, the *Female Force* series features comic books focusing on performers Taylor Swift, Lizzo, Dolly Parton, Stevie Nicks, P!nk, and Mariah Carey. "There's lots of people more talented than me," says the unabashedly honest Dolly in her colorful comic, "but I've always had more guts than talent."

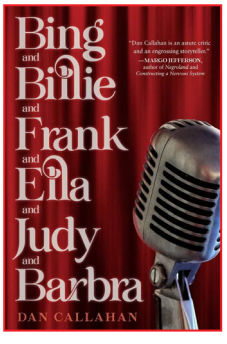


Bing and Billie and Frank and Ella and Judy and Barbra

By Dan Callahan

(hardcover) **$30.00**

Callahan delivers an epic tale of how these artists dominated American popular music over a 50-year period, a rollercoaster ride that gains momentum through the '30s and '40s, reaches a crest of magical creativity in the '50s and early '60s, and then crashes down by the early '70s, a half-century when the great American songbook dominated the airwaves and the fight for racial equality came to the forefront.

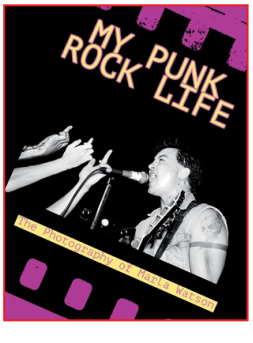


My Punk Rock Life: The Photography of Marla Watson

By Marla Watson

(hardcover) **$50.00**

Categorizing herself as more of an historian than a pro photographer, Watson's images (kept in a box in her attic for 40 years) emphasize the fans' point of view, right smack dab in the mosh pits. She has reached out to both friends and strangers to write short pieces about what it felt like to be a punk back then, including personal stories and experiences of intense performances by Ian Mackaye, Jello Biafra, Keith Morris, Mike Burkett, Jeff Nelson and others, many of whom are featured in the book. May bring back memories or even a few nightmares.



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Our Thing: While continuing to develop her career as an independent rapper and recording artist, SAAVI is also creating a dynamic, one-of-a-kind environment for musical creatives at Cosa Nostra Studios ("CNS"), the independent state-of-the-art Burbank studio she developed from the ground up after she relocated from the Bay Area in 2022. SAAVI's passion for hip-hop came from her dad, and when he passed away when she was 19, she abandoned her industry ambitions, went to UCSB, and became a paralegal for years at an intellectual property law firm. At some point, while still with that job, she decided to revisit her early ambitions and connected with veteran engineer Renson Mateo, who convinced her to pursue a career as an independent artist.

Having once had to work four jobs to support her family, SAAVI applied her DIY work ethic to building up an arsenal of equipment and launching Cosa Nostra Studios—one of the few female-owned facilities in the L.A. area. Partly an homage to her mother's Sicilian heritage," the clever moniker translates in Italian to "our thing"—which reflects her mission to develop not only a room for commercial recording but a safe gathering space for a close-knit group of creatives to develop their craft. While men are welcome, she is actively working to build a tight-knit community of talented female creatives. Cosa Nostra Studios' grand opening was on Aug. 12, 2023.

Creator's Camps: Driven by SAAVI's "La Famiglia" concept, CNS is now hosting regular creator's camps, inviting people to meet other creatives and, as she says, "pressing play" on any body of work they would like to share and receive constructive feedback on. The gatherings are intended to bring artists, songwriters, and producers together. At the event in September, a female rapper came in and inspired SAAVI to create bars of her own on the way to a deeper collaboration. "We let the results speak for themselves," she says. "In an industry that sometimes marginalizes females, I want to give women a sanctuary where they can feel comfortable and, most of all, where they can feel appreciated and heard." SAAVI also hopes to launch educational camps around different creative disciplines.

Now Available for Booking: Cosa Nostra Studios is a two-room, Mac-based studio with an Apple Studio display. The vocal chain consists of Neuman Neve 1073 SPX, into an LA 2A, then an Apollo Twin, which goes into either Protools or Logic. The mics for recording include Neumann U87 and a TLM-103. There is also a podcast recording space featuring two Shure mics. For clients who need engineers, she has contracted top local talent. The walls are blacked out while the space is white accented and illuminated by cool LED light strips. SAAVI says, "When someone walks in here, I want them to experience a great vibe that makes them feel like they're at home."

Contact Cosa Nostra Studios, 818-732-9118

RECORDING IN PROGRESS

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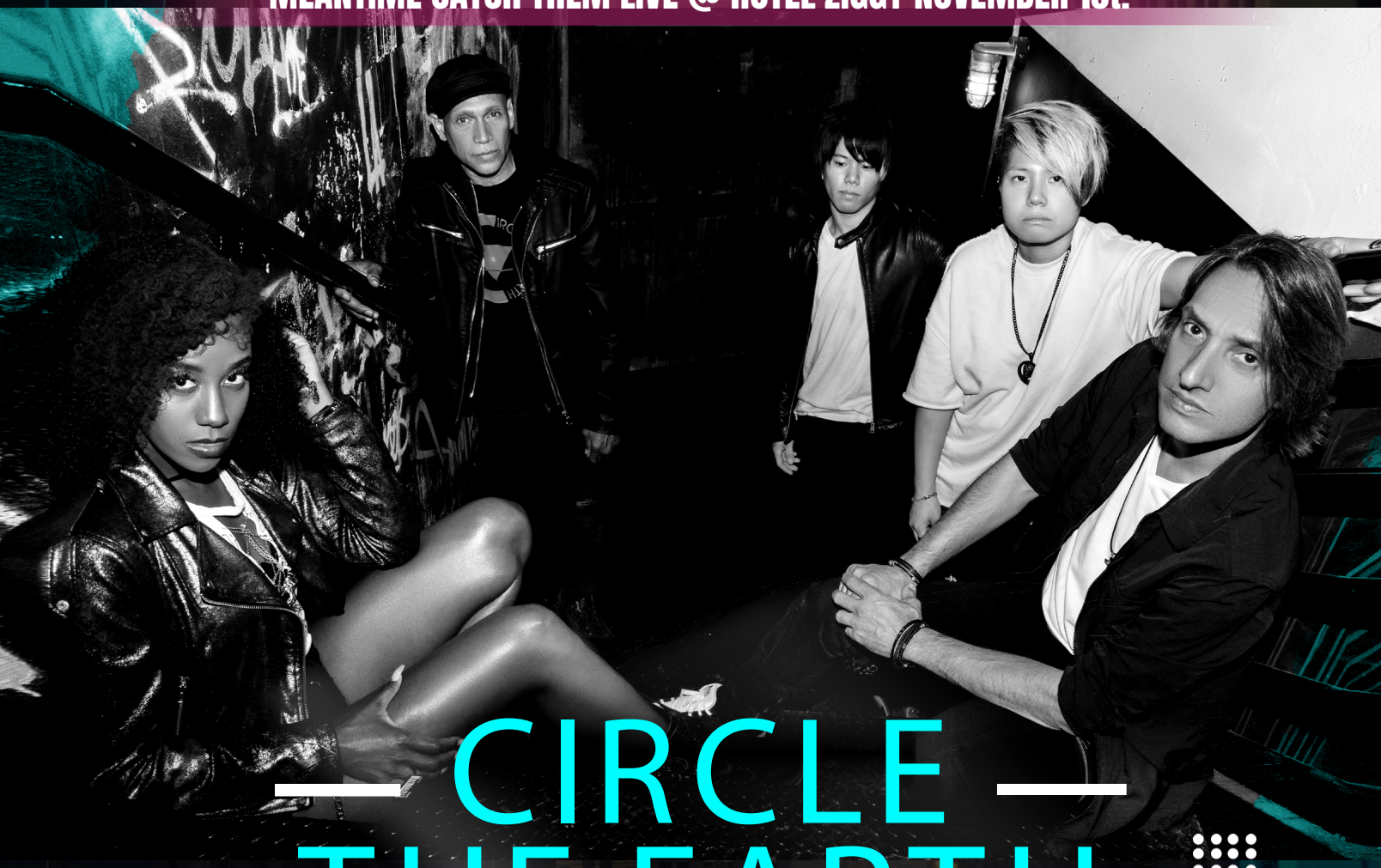

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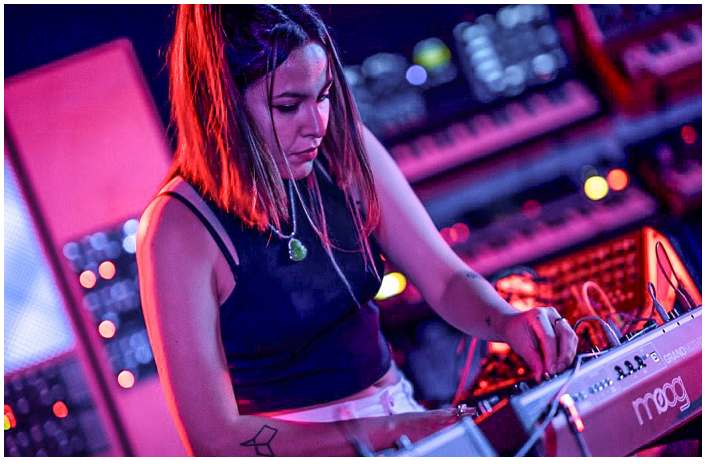
▲ CHRIS CLANCEY IMPACT

Producer/singer-songwriter Chris Clancy is widely recognized as the vocalist for rock band Mutiny Within, on top of his mixing and engineering for Machine Head, Kataklysm, Evile, Overkill, Possessed and more. Clancy recently signed with Hard Impact Music for management.

▲ CANNONS AT PHANTOM STUDIOS

Pictured at Phantom Studios in Gallatin, TN is Cannons' frontwoman Michelle Joy, recording "Bad Tattoo," lead single from latest album *Heartbeat Highway*. This track marks their first major collaboration with an outside producer, Mike Elizondo (Eminem, Carrie Underwood), as well as co-writer Mikky Echo (Rihanna, Maroon 5).



▲ DEBIT AT MOOG

Electronic music producers Delia Beatriz (aka Debit) spent some quality time at Moog Music's factory and studio space in Asheville, North Carolina. Debit is pictured demonstrating a Grandmother, among other semi-modular synthesizers.

▲ HOLLOW RIVER

Pop-punk-rapper Hollow River (the alias of multi-instrumentalist Mark MacDonald) has released *We're Going To Be OK*, marking the third release in one year. The former Berklee College of Music student dropped out with one semester left to pursue a music career full-time.

PRODUCER PLAYBACK

"Be patient and make sure that your sound is unique. Be yourself because it's the only way we'll be able to see you in a crowd."

– ERIC BELLINGER

(Justin Bieber, Chris Brown, Nicki Minaj)

▲ JB'S VISION AHEAD

Hartford, CT-native (now based in N.Y.C.) Jonathan Barber (pictured second from right) has already recorded drums and toured worldwide with jazz greats Pat Metheny, Nicholas Payton, Jeremy Pelt, Terrace Martin, Jennifer Holiday, and is ai composer and leader with his Vision Ahead band. The group recently wrapped recording a follow-up to their self-titled debut.

▲ LE MOBILE RECORDING TRUCK

After more than 30 years with Le Mobile recording truck, Ian Charbonneau recently founded The Recording Project, and is pictured with his Fly-Pak portable recording system before the 2023 Crossroads Festival. Charbonneau has also recorded concerts with Imagine Dragons, Melissa Etheridge, Macklemore, Dua Lipa, Khalid, and Jack Harlow, to name a few.

▲ DANIEL NOAH MILLER

Singer-songwriter Daniel Noah Miller honors his Nicaraguan and Caribbean roots, while making it his own, looping in soul, rock and ambient sounds. Miller has released the single "Otherwise," produced by Jack Hallenback (Haim, Maggie Rogers, Girlpool), and a video performing from scratch through a looping process.

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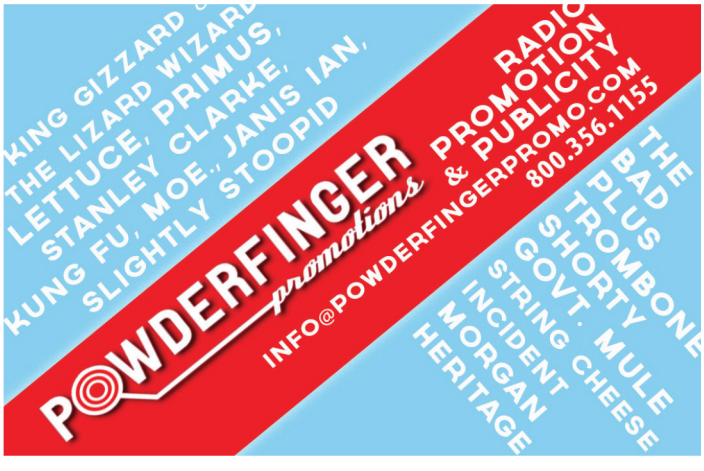

CARTER LANG

Six-time Grammy nominee and Chicago native Carter Lang studied classical piano as a child, advanced to electric bass in middle school, and then graduated to guitar in high school. He began to learn engineering as a member of local band the O'Mys and his skills were sharpened further when a friend gifted him an MPC beat pad and he started to make beats. Following college, he connected with fellow Chicagoan Chance the Rapper. Lang went on to co-produce a number of SZA's records, including 2017's smash debut *Ctrl* and 2022's SOS. He's also collaborated with Post Malone, Doja Cat and contributed to Chance the Rapper's 2016 mixtape *Coloring Book*.

Experience has long been noted for its potent teaching value. Lessons drawn from challenges are likely of equal worth. "Sometimes the biggest challenge is just to be able to pivot quickly between stuff," Lang says. "There's also the challenge of not rushing into things like when I want to add a solo at the end of a song. I don't want to do it until I can attack it. It's finding the balance between the delivery of something great and on time while also taking my time. It's just enough to understand when I'm going to get the best take from myself. There's also the challenge of having the patience not to push [an idea] on someone. Let the music make that decision. That's what's best for the song."

THE 3 MOST IMPORTANT

. . . lessons he's learned as a musician and producer are:

- The three most important lessons he's learned as a musician and producer are:
- Don't over-prepare. I've done it many times and then had to pivot.
- Practice your instrument between sessions and record everything you do.
- Dig back and see if you have any interest in the music of the past. Having that genre library in your head gives you the edge of recognition.

When *Ctrl* dropped in 2017, a number of opportunities materialized for Lang including a publishing deal with Warner Chappell Music. Recently that deal was renewed. "I didn't have a manager then and I wanted to be careful," Lang recalls. "I needed to develop my team first. I learned in school and from Chance not to give away my publishing. By entering into the contract, I learned the importance of having some skin in the game and that publishing is a way that music gets monetized. I'm also developing new ventures along with my manager David Waltzer. We met at a session in 2017. At the time, I needed to link with someone who'd be down in the field with me more than I needed a publishing deal."

Essentially, there are three key moments in a song's creation lifecycle: the beginning, when it assumes a life of its own and then, of course, completion. How do artists know when a song has merit and is beginning to work? "When it comes naturally, artists start to get excited and words seem to come out of nowhere," the producer observes. "You want to grab onto it like it's a flow state. When a song's finished, all the parts that are there are the best version of that thing. When I listen to something and know that it's beautiful the way that it is, I know that it's done."

All artists and engineers have favorite pieces of gear and their preferences are as varied as the songs that they create. "My gear is always shifting and changing," Lang explains. "But right now I love to experiment with the most primitive aspects of tone on the Serge synthesizer. It allows me to get in touch with a new side of music. I also love my [Yamaha] CS-60, which finds its way into a lot of tracks because it's a warm, organic-sounding synth. There's also the MPC 1000, which I've used for years."

Contact Instagram: @iam_c_lang;
Kristin.Somin@ledecompany.com, Samantha.Brensilber@ledecompany.com

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Clients: Many of the world's leading touring entertainment, music festivals/ concerts and similar live event companies.

> *"Some artists behave better than others. We take that into account – what kind of risks do they pose to themselves?"*

BACKGROUND

Performing comes with myriad threats, including theft, illness, weather, and personal injury. Insurance makes sure financial resources are available after bad things happen. As the Managing Director of the Entertainment Division at Allianz Risk Consulting, Kurt Miner provides financial safety nets for artists so the show may go on.

A History of Risk-Focused Employment

I started at Universal in the safety department back in the late 80s. From there, L.A. County Fire Department hired me as a firefighter. I subsequently worked there, as well as being a helicopter pilot. Through the time I was there, I worked in live television and events. That was my off-duty job. After my service, I came back fulltime working for Fireman's Fund [Insurance Company] and now for Allianz.

I was a stunt driver. I was a factory driver for Porsche and BMW. I'm also a Marine captain. All those crazy things have led me to where I am now.

Insurance for Acts Big and Small

Even for a band that's touring out of a van, we suggest getting insurance. The policies are relatively affordable, and it can cover equipment if there is theft or failure.

When you get into the major acts, just their stage package is a couple million dollars. For an artist touring with 30 semis, we're getting into not only the materials but also how they're setting up.

Insuring Reputations

We're looking at what [our clients'] reputational risks might be, if they're doing something that doesn't look good in the public eye. We've turned down artists that were not in alignment with the views of board members, because [the artist's behaviors] can theoretically be a reputational risk.

Choose a Specialist Broker

Pick a broker that has knowledge within your area. A lot of times, [artists] will have people insuring vehicles for them or maybe their homes, and they have a relationship with them. They use that person to place some of these coverages that may not be adequate. And typically they are pricier than if you went to an entertainment broker that specializes in those things.

Some policies won't cover the actions that the insured is doing. And when it comes time to pay that claim, they find out their policy didn't cover that. So seek out a broker that specializes in your business.

Contingency Insurance

If you are unable to complete a show due to damage to equipment or a vehicle, or a band member becomes ill or has to take leave, there are policies that allow you to hedge that situation. You can theoretically get paid for those times. Contingency insurance can be somewhat pricey, but it can be beneficial when your tour gets cancelled and you're not able to have that income.

Covering the Right Risks

Does a tour consist of local dates or is it international? Where is the equipment going to be stored? How are they traveling? Is [the equipment being] traveled by van? Is it by semi? Is it by 20 semis? All of those things factor into coming up with premiums and coverages.

Some clients like to have a lot of insurance. Some go a little leaner due to budgets and other constraints. Property insurance may cover if your stuff gets stolen out of a hotel room, but not if it's damaged during a performance, vehicle crash or rain.

Looking at Algorithms

We have smart individuals that do actuarial studies on claims and frequency modules to assess risks. And then we pick good risks, all the way down to the artist and their history. Some artists behave better than others. We take that into account—what kind of risks do they pose to themselves?

Hands-On Risk Assessment

We go to about 40 to 50 festivals a year. We review the engineering schematics for stages, the exiting, whether it's a standalone area in a field or a major stadium in a city. We'll look at the footprints of those outlays. We are one of the only [insurers] that will field verify with production that what they've put on those [blueprints] is what they've created.

Giving Guidance

We work with clients to value-add our services. I have brokers who call and say, "Are you coming to this festival this weekend?" And I'm saying, "You guys moved that business to another carrier." And they're like, "Yeah, but we still want you guys to come out," because we help them be successful. We see a lot of things they normally wouldn't see, so they value our services.

Real-Time Crowd Monitoring

We partner with CCTV companies. Larger productions have the budgets to use cameras. And we give them incentives, sometimes through breaks on premiums, depending on their history and who's running the shows.

I am able to sit at my desk and monitor sometimes two or even three festivals. Maybe there's a fence down. Next thing you know, people are climbing to an area they're not supposed to be. I call their command post and say, "I'm looking at a fence and people are climbing over." If I was on site, I wouldn't have been able to find that.

Social Media Data

We have systems that capture every text and picture [going to] TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook out of a festival. We're able to look for certain words. We'll put in "gate" or "rush" or "crowds" and a bunch of texts will pop up saying, "We're going to bum rush Gate 5." And you see a group of thre–hundred people getting ready to do it. We're able to mount a crew of police or security people and that crowd disperses.

Run the Math

Insurance is one of the best things to protect you from things that are unseen. There are large contingents that self-insure, because they're able to hedge those risks. You kind of have to do the numbers and say, "What element of risk am I willing to take, and what's the potential loss?" Or, "If I'm going to lose $5,000 worth of equipment but my policy premiums are more than that..." It boils down to seeing what makes the most sense.

Be Cautious

Just because you trust your team, it doesn't mean you don't need to think for yourself. And if something's not safe, you need to say, "I'm not performing." At the end of the day, the artist's name is the one that will be associated with an issue. It typically won't be on ABC Production Company. It will fall back to the artist, because that's what's newsworthy. So look out to protect your name and brand. Use your intuition. You need to be cognizant that if someone in your audience gets injured it is going to be front-page news.

OPPS

Position Music wants a Director of Marketing, Recorded Music.
The Director of Marketing, Recorded Music will play a key role in the strategic direction, planning, and implementation of marketing initiatives for Position Music's roster of recording artists. Lead strategic direction, planning, implementation and management of your own roster of artists. Head brainstorming around the best ideas, content and strategy for every campaign and implement the resulting plans. Collaborate with internal and external teams including A&R, Digital, Operations, Distribution, Brand Partnerships, Creative Content, Synch, Press and others to craft bespoke, ground-breaking campaigns. Apply at SaluteMyJob.

Warner Music Group is looking for a Coordinator.
Under direct supervision, with some latitude for independent judgment and decision, the Coordinator is responsible for providing executive and administration support to the SVP of Creative Sync and other department members as needed, and will be involved in marketing efforts, creative initiatives, and pitching music. Welcome visitors, screen and direct phone calls/inquiries, process expenses, schedule and coordinate domestic and international meetings, maintain all calendar items, coordinate domestic and international travel, process incoming mail and correspondence, prepare outgoing mail, and ensure the office is always fully equipped and functions smoothly. Apply at Talent.com.

Netflix needs someone responsible for Music.
They will spend their free time exploring the ecosystems of music for the next great artists and studying musicology. Coordinating with Netflix's internal cross-functional stakeholders as well as outside parties, including labels, publishers, copyright owners, composers, their managers and/or attorneys, regarding ownership, invoicing and license tracking. Researching music ownership and seeking/obtaining quotes from music libraries. Building and maintaining strong relationships with internal partners and third-party companies, labels, artists, studios, and publishers. Managing Netflix marcomms music clearance and rights information including tracking territory, media and terms and maintaining/tracking all cue sheets. Apply at Talent.com.

Amazon Studios LLC wants a Music Coordinator, Series, Amazon Studios Music.
Amazon is seeking a Coordinator to join its music team supporting the Studios Film and TV productions. The Music department's main role is to deliver compelling, high-quality music that supports Amazon Studios' original programming. The Music Coordinator will work closely with the Head of Music and be an integral part of the music team. The successful candidate will be highly organized and motivated to create streamlined processes to ensure efficiency. You will be expected to leverage strong communication and interpersonal skills in order to partner effectively across divisions and with external partners. Apply at Geebo.

▲ MARÍA ISABEL DROVE U CRAZY

Queens, NY native María Isabel has released Illangelo-produced new single "I Drove U Crazy." The song is an ode to New York, and there's an Olivia De Camps-directed video too. "'I Drove You Crazy' is about being too much for somebody in a relationship, but trying to find power in that," Isabel explains of the single. "Sometimes it's easier to blame the other person when things don't work out, but the further I get from past relationships, the easier I find it to take accountability for my role in them and accept that sometimes two people just don't belong together. Like fine, I can be the bad guy, let's talk about it." Contact ceri.roberts@warnerrecords.com for more info.

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LABELS-RELEASES SIGNINGS

Sweet Pill signs to Hopeless Records.
Philadelphia-based band **Sweet Pill** are the latest signees to **Hopeless Records** and they've celebrated by releasing new single "Starchild." "I believe myself to be an awkward person trying really hard to have a strong backbone," says Sweet Pill's Zayn Youssef. "I sometimes catch myself putting others first, leaving none for myself. Ultimately, 'Starchild' sums up what it feels like to having the burden of someone else's responsibilities with a million eyes on you at the same time. Through out it all, I just dont wanna fuck up, ever. All in all, it leads to burning out and failing. What do I owe to the people around me that have done nothing but take what I have?" Contact brandy@hopelessrecords.com for more info.

DIY Spotlight

VERA BLOOM

ALTERNATIVE ROCK/PUNK SINGER, songwriter and musician Vera Bloom saw her musical journey start when she was just six years old.

"I've always been a bit of a rebel without a cause, so as I grew up I spent a lot of my practice time improvising and writing my own songs instead of practicing what I was supposed to," Bloom says. "Since I could write, I've been an avid writer of poetry and journaling, and it was my father who introduced me to the idea of songwriting and adding lyrics to music. The piano was my instrument for writing, but I made the switch to guitar at age 18 and something really clicked. I performed in classical piano recitals throughout elementary and middle school, but in high school I performed my own song on the piano with a drummer in the school talent show and won first place. That's when I knew this could be something and that my songs could reach people."

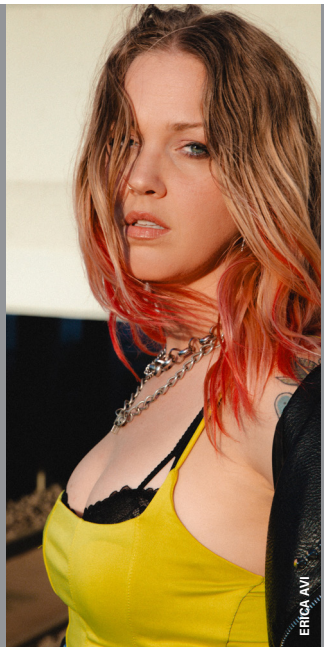
She describes her sound as unpredictable, skirting around the punk sub-genres. That can all be heard on the recent *It's Me* EP.

"*It's Me* is a compilation of six songs I had written over a year and a half that all belong in the same chapter of my life," Bloom says. "The common themes are self-love, owning and recognizing self-worth, and reflection and growth. All the songs except "Boxes" were recorded here in Nashville at Battle Tapes Studio, and engineered by Jeremy Ferguson, who also recorded my first EP. The lead guitarist on the songs, Jacob Carey, engineered "Boxes" in his home studio. The tracks feature Brian Chinino on drums, Levi J Miller on bass guitar, Jacob Carey on lead guitars, and me singing and playing rhythm guitar."

For Bloom, "DIY" means being true to yourself and keeping it real.

"It means doing what you like versus what you think you should do or is expected of you," she says. "I really strive to maintain this in my music and my music videos, and I think that's something that people really like about me. That's why my sound is a bit unpredictable, really, because I do what I want and what I like and what the songs want versus shaping it into something that fits in a box to 'stay on brand.'"

For more, visit verabloom.net.



Landon Barker signs with DTA.
Southern California's singer, songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, and fashion maven **Landon Barker** has signed to **DTA Records** and simultaneously released his debut single "Friends With Your EX." The video for the song has been directed by Chris Villa, and it sees sees Barker alongside girlfriend **Charli D'Amelio** as well as **Joe Chavez**, **Michael Tua**, **Chazdon Jeffery**, **Carl Dawson**, and **Zack Lugo**. Contact rossanderson@elektra.com for more info.

Eivør pens deal with Seasons of Mist.
Faroe Islands artist **Eivør** has signed to **Seasons of Mist,** a label well-known for metal, but less for this musician's combination of dark electronics and Faroese folk. "My team and I are incredibly proud and excited to work with Season of Mist," Eivør said in a statement. "After a few years of self-releasing my music, I am very much looking forward to becoming part of the SOM family and to all the new adventures that lay ahead." Contact will.yarbrough@season-of-mist.com for more.

PROPS

Asian Hall of Fame inductees announced.
The **Asian Hall of Fame**, with the ceremony scheduled to take place on Saturday, Oct. 21, has announced that it will be inducting former **Soundgarden** man **Kim Thayil** and **Hiro Yamatoto**, as well as Asian Hall of Fame chairman **Noel Lee**, SAG-AFTRA national chairman **Ren Hanami**, and animation director **Momo Wang**. Thayil and Yamamoto are to perform alongside ambassador **Robby Krieger** of the **Doors** and *America's Got Talent* contestant **Maki Mae**. Contact emanuela.cariolagian@gmail.com for more.

BRETT CALLWOOD has written about music for two decades, originally for Kerrang!, Classic Rock, Metal Hammer and more in the U.K. He's the author of two books, about Detroit proto-punks, the MC5 and the Stooges. He's now the music editor at LA Weekly, and has regular bylines in the SF Weekly, Tucson Weekly and idobi Radio, as well as here in *Music Connection*. He can be reached at brettcallwood@gmail.com

▲ VIXEN IS IN THE RED

Legendary female rock band Vixen have released a new single and corresponding video called "Red," produced by Cinderella drummer Fred Coury. The new look band features former Femme Fatale singer Lorraine Lewis, Britt Lightning on guitar, Julia Lage on bass, and original member Roxy Petrucci on drums. "'Red' is a very dynamic and hard driving rocker of a song," says Petrucci. "Modern yet embracing the amazing harmonies and catchy choruses that are signature to the classic Vixen style. It's important to me that we honor Jan and the band's 35-year legacy by staying true to the Vixen sound while melding in fresh new ideas." Contact aaron@chummypress.com for more info.

The LEGAL Beat

BY GLENN LITWAK

SHOULD I ARBITRATE MY DISPUTE?

SHOULD YOU TRY TO arbitrate your music industry dispute? The short answer is: it depends.

If you have a written contract that provides that any dispute will be resolved by binding arbitration, then you must arbitrate. Even if there is no provision for binding arbitration in a contract, the parties can still stipulate (agree) to binding arbitration.

The traditional thinking is that binding arbitration may be a quicker way than litigation to resolve disputes. However, depending on the jurisdiction, it may not be all that quicker. Another factor to consider is the cost. I recently had a case where the arbitration company required a $40,000 payment to begin the process. If you were to go to court, for instance, in L.A. County, CA, it would only cost a $435 filing fee to begin litigation. So initially arbitration may be more expensive. However, if a court case goes all the way to trial, the expenses could exceed what an arbitration costs, since there is usually more extensive discovery in litigation, more motions and a longer trial.

An arbitration provision in a contract will generally designate the company that will conduct the arbitration, such as AAA or JAMS. If you choose arbitration you will have to pay the arbitration company's fees as well as the fees of the arbitration. Arbitrators often charge $500 or more per hour.

There is usually more choice as to who the arbitrator is in an arbitration as opposed to court where you are assigned a judge. With arbitrations, you generally will have a choice of a number of retired judges to act as the arbitrator. There are various ways to choose the arbitrator, but if the parties cannot agree, then the arbitration company will have procedures to select one.

You should consider your right to appeal in deciding how you want to resolve your dispute. If you lose a case in litigation you can appeal it. But there are very limited grounds to appeal an arbitration award. You may regret giving up your right to appeal if you lose your arbitration.

Another possible advantage of arbitration is that it is more relaxed and informal. A trial will take place in court. Arbitrations are held in a conference room of an office. And, the rules of evidence are generally more relaxed in an arbitration proceeding.

Litigation is generally a matter of public record, so it is not confidential. However, arbitration proceedings will usually remain confidential, which may be advantageous to some parties.

If you obtain an arbitration award will the arbitrator enforce it? The answer is no. The procedure is usually you file a petition with the court to enter the arbitration award as a judgment which you can then enforce. The court will routinely grant these petitions with few exceptions.

So, should you agree to binding arbitration? You should consider all the issues discussed above and retain an experienced attorney to advise you.

GLENN LITWAK is a veteran entertainment attorney based in Santa Monica, CA. He has represented platinum selling recording artists, Grammy winning music producers, hit songwriters, management and production companies, music publishers and independent record labels. Glenn is also a frequent speaker at music industry conferences around the country, such as South by Southwest and the Billboard Music in Film and TV Conference. Email Litwak at gtllaw59@gmail.com or visit glennlitwak.com.

This article is a very brief overview of the subject matter and does not constitute legal advice.

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RETT MADISON

Date Signed: Feb. 2023
Label: Warner Records / War Buddha Records
Type of Music: Americana / Folk / Rock / Indie
Management: Eric Mayers, Rick Krim - Red Light Management
Booking: Mary-Michael Teel - William Morris Endeavor
Legal: Elliot Groffman
Publicity: reid.kutrow@sacksco.com; ethan.jacobs@sacksco.com; rick.gershon@warnerrecords.com
Web: rettmadison.com
A&R: Neil Mason, Jaren Johnston, Aaron Bay-Schuck

Neil Mason and Jaren Johnston, members of Southern rock group The Cadillac Three, were working with Warner Records when they came across the music of Rett Madison. The cross-genre singer had independently released her debut album, *Pin-Up Daddy*, and the title track delivered a wallop. It took a loan from the diva's producer, Vulfpeck's Theo Katzman, to finish the record, and a licensing deal with AWAL for it to reach listeners, but the Los Angeles transplant's efforts got her talent noticed.

When it came time for Johnston and Mason to form their own label under the Warner umbrella, Madison immediately popped into their minds. Mason reached out to her management team in December of 2022 and then caught Madison's showcase performance, held in a Los Angeles studio. No more than 40 people were in attendance that fateful day.

"Don't settle for less. Settle for numbers that can help change your life."

Madison had been searching for a partner, especially since she'd already recorded her second album, *One For Jackie*, and needed money to get it mixed and mastered. Until that point, none had suited her. The moment she connected with the duo, the proudly queer singer knew it was a solid fit. "With any deal I sign, I want to make sure I feel genuine passion," she declares, "and that folks understand what I'm doing. Neil and Jaren really want me to be myself as an artist."

Besides working alongside people who have faith in her musical vision, Madison needed to be sure there would be enough funding to properly tour. "That's such an important factor for me," the West Virginia native announces. "The way I build my fan base is connecting with people in a live setting." Madison is War Buddha's first official signing.

In addition to putting out the rising star's sophomore release on Oct. 27, War Buddha snatched up her debut album. Neither would have happened without the singer getting the financial backing she believes she's worth. "Don't settle for less," Madison warns. "Settle for numbers that can help change your life." ***– Andy Kaufmann***

OLIVIA LUNNY

Date Signed: October 2020
Label: Infinity & Records / UMG
Type of Music: Pop
Management: Tony Beard, tony@tapmgmt.com
Booking: Marty Diamond, mdiamond@teamwass.com
Legal: Jonathan Koby
Publicity: Cara Wodnicki, cara@cswpublicity.com
Web: olivialunny.com
A&R: Jerry Deifer

Olivia Lunny is a singer-songwriter from Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada who is building her career on solid ground. She comes from a strong family that supports her talent. And she's appropriately taken the steps to establish herself as an artist in her native Canada. She is now poised to take on the U.S. music scene, as well.

In recent weeks Lunny scored her U.S. Top 40 radio debut with the single "Timezone." This is a major accomplishment, not just for her as an independent songwriter and artist, but for her label Infinity & Records, as it was their first Top 40 radio debut, as well.

The 23-year-old artist began in her teens, with an early break at 14 years old performing at the Winnipeg Folk Festival. Raised on Stevie Nicks, Norah Jones, Coldplay and Ed Sheeran, Lunny was propelled into the next level of musical status at 18 when she appeared in 2019 on a Canadian musical reality program called *The Launch*. She won the competition, with a song called "I Got You," and that set her on a trajectory that continues in earnest.

"Winnipeg was a very collaborative town where everybody played in each other's bands and wrote songs together," says Lunny. "But when I wanted to make more music that was of a specific pop sound I realized I would have to move from Winnipeg. I never knew how I was gonna make that move, but being on *The Launch*, pardon the pun, really launched me onto the Canadian music scene."

"I had had some success independently."

In 2020 Lunny won the Young Canadian Songwriter Award from the SOCAN Foundation, signed an initial deal with Universal Music Canada/ Virgin Music and released her debut EP *To the Ones I Loved*. In 2021 Lunny released an eponymous full-length album that spawned hits like "Who Could Say No" and "Sad to See You Happy."

The young songstress partnered with her main producer and songwriting collaborator A.J. Healy, who she came to know from *The Launch* experience. And she has been the first signing for Infinity & Records by her brother Christian Lunny and Jerry Deifer.

"Jerry has a ton of experience with record labels in the U.S.," explains Lunny. "They really believed in me. It was right place, right time. I had had some success independently and they wanted to help me take things to the next level. Infinity & Records offered a proper deal, whereas that TV show deal was pretty aggressive and like a 10-year commitment. With this new situation I definitely have a lot of creative freedom. I get to make the final call on things, which doesn't happen all the time." ***– Eric Harabadian***

WILLIE JONES

Date Signed: March 2021
Label: Sony Music Nashville
Type of Music: Country
Manager: Jonnie Forster - The Penthouse
Legal: Christian Barker - Shackelford Law
Publicity: Courtney Beebe - Sony Music Nashville
Web: williejonesmusic.com
A&R: Margaret Tomlin - Sony Music Nashville

Willie Jones, described as a "country-trap iconoclast," released *Something to Dance to* in June, his reward for a long journey. Jones has been singing and performing since he was a kid at church, though really got rolling doing musical theater in high school.

"It helped me understand so much on how to command a stage and project my voice to everyone in the room," Jones says. "I still use those techniques today."

Jones describes his sound as a "mixture of my influences, which weaves and evolves from country, hip-hop, rock, and soul." It was that mixture that caught the eye of The Penthouse.

"I met Jonnie Forster, owner of The Penthouse, and his team a few years back walking into their studios, in Los Angeles," Jones said. "He heard my early demos and we vibed for a bit. We literally started making music within a week or so after, and I basically never left. They took me in, treating me as family, helped develop my sound while protecting it from industry folk who wanted me to change. I know they shield me from a lot of bullets, but I'll take one for them, too. Plus, they're the ultimate dot connectors."

One of the biggest of those dots was the deal with Sony Nashville.

"We had a lot of interest from labels outside of Nashville, but thought, if I'm going to do country, let's find the home that has the muscle and the

"I know they shield me from a lot of bullets."

vision," Jones says. "Randy Goodman, the Chairman and CEO at Sony Music Nashville, heard about me from the Sony U.K. office when we were touring out there, but true story, what closed the deal was when Randy was vacationing somewhere with his family, one of his kid's friends was playing my music on a boat. Randy called Jonnie with the Head of A&R at the time, Jim Catino; the next day and it just fast tracked from there. Shout out to Randy's kid's friend. I owe ya one!"

With the deal now in place, Jones and his team can focus on rolling out the *Something to Dance to* album.

"The album has greasy country bangers with that Louisiana sauce," he says. "These songs are Willie Jones songs, meaning I don't think other artists could pull them off, nor should they want to. Songs were written mostly in Los Angeles, and some in Nashville. I get inspired by energy and making people move, so get ready: if you're not on your feet once you hit PLAY, check your ears" **– *Brett Callwood***

SWEET PILL

Date Signed: September 2023
Label: Hopeless Records
Band Members: Zayna Youssef, vocals; Jayce Williams, guitar; Sean McCall, guitar; Ryan Cullen, bass; Chris Kearney, drums
Type of Music: Emo/Punk influenced
Management: Joe Marro, joseph@lessermatters.com, kirk@lessermatters.com
Booking: Lisa Schiffman, lschiffman@tbaagency.com
Legal: Paul Sommerstein, ps@paulsommerstein.com
Publicity: Brandy Robidoux, Brandy@hopelessrecords.com
Web: instagram.com/sweetpilll; linktr.ee/sweetpill
A&R: Eric Tobin

Five-piece band Sweet Pill measured out melodies on the road for a substantial part of the past few years. The investment paid off when the quintet was offered opening duties for Michigan band La Dispute. Kirk Harrington, La Dispute's manager, also recognized potential in the band and he partnered with Joe Marro, Hopeless Records labelmate The Wonder Years' manager. Together they formed Lesser Matters, which became Sweet Pill's management company. The investment earned further dividends when Eric Tobin, A&R rep with Hopeless, saw the band at an L.A. show. He flew out to Chicago to catch

"We sent the contract back and forth a few times."

another set and to offer a deal. But he wasn't alone in his interest. The principle of scarcity kicked in and three other labels made swift offers. Ultimately, though, Hopeless carried the day.

"It was pretty organic," singer Zayna Youssef recalls. "Eric Tobin at Hopeless liked Where the Heart Is, the record we put out with [previous label] Topshelf. Early this year he talked to our manager who let us know [of his interest]. But other A&R people also heard [about] it. We had one offer come in and then three more immediately after that. It was overwhelming because we'd just released our EP the previous year and went on our first-ever U.S. tour."

Tobin was determined to sign the band, but Youssef remained circumspect. "This was all new to me and I didn't want someone to own my music forever," she recollects. "But Hopeless really wanted us and even put up money to consult a lawyer. Tobin was extremely genuine throughout the process and that's what got me. He kept sweetening the pot and believed in us. We sent the contract back and forth a few times. It wasn't like 'Here you go' and we jumped on it."

Now signed to Hopeless Records, the four-song EP *Starchild* is in the works with a target release of spring, 2024. Meanwhile, the lead single "Starchild" debuted in late September. In addition to a number of dates, Sweet Pill played fabled fest South by Southwest in early 2023. The band's first headlining tour is slated to kick off in April commensurate with the drop of Starchild. **– *Rob Putnam***

▲ VIRGIN MUSIC INKS CZARFACE

Inspectah Deck (Wu-Tang Clan), Esoteric, and 7L join forces with Virgin Music in their hip-hop supergroup Czarface, signing for global representation. Their 2013 self-titled debut led to collabs with MF Doom, Ghostface Killah, Roc Marciano, Mayhem Lauren, Method Man and more.

► BULLENS' TRANSELECTRIC

With endorsements from Sir Elton John, Billie Jean King, Bonnie Raitt, T Bone Burnett, and others, Cidny Bullens—vocalist for Elton John and Rod Stewart, singing in 1978's *Grease*, and having 9 acclaimed solo albums—navigates his journey and music career in: *TransElectric: My Life as a Cosmic Rock Star*.

▲ BLIND BOYS OF ALABAMA DOCUMENTARY

Following new album *Echoes Of The South*, GRAMMY Lifetime Achievement Award honorees and Gospel Music Hall of Fame members The Blind Boys of Alabama released a mini-doc *This May Be The Last Time* with Benjamin Moore and Paul Beasely, available to watch on YouTube.

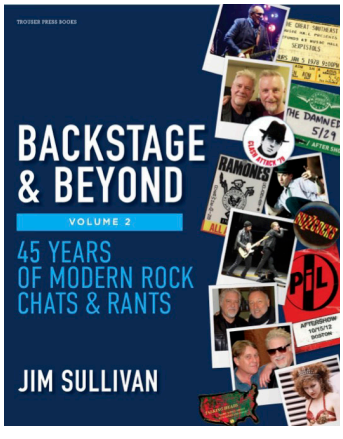
Deadline for Acoustic Music Awards

The deadline is fast approaching for the 20th Annual IAMA (International Acoustic Music Awards); a great opportunity for music artists everywhere. IAMA is the preeminent awards for musicians, promoting excellence in acoustic music performance and artistry. Participating sponsors include Acoustic Café and Sirius XM Satellite Radio. Music artists stand a chance to win awards in eight different categories: Best Male Artist, Best Female Artist, Best Group/Duo Folk, Americana/ Roots/AAA, Instrumental, Open (any musical style or genre), Bluegrass/ Country, etc. There will also be an Overall Grand Prize winner awarded to the top winner worth over $11,000, which includes radio promotion to over 250 radio stations in U.S. and Canada. The deadline to enter is Nov. 9. For more information, go to inacoustic.com

BMI London Awards

Founding member, primary songwriter, and guitarist for Spandau Ballet, Gary Kemp received the BMI Icon Award at this year's London Awards, which celebrates Top U.K. and European Songwriters, Publishers and Composers. Kemp's songs have spent a combined 500 weeks on the charts and achieved over 25 million record sales. Producer P2J received the BMI Impact Award for his creative vision and impact, with Ghanaian group FBS playing a medley including "Essence" (Wizkid featuring Tems), "Brown Skin Girl (Beyonce, SAINt JHN and Wizkid), "Anybody" (Burna Boy), etc.

BMI London Song of the Year went to Doja Cat and songwriters Aaron Horn, Linden Jay, Jidenna and Yeti Beats for "Woman," which spent 52 weeks on Billboard's Hot 100 chart. Sting's "Every Breath You Take" (for 18 million performances) and "Every Little Thing She Does Is Magic" (10 million performances), Van Morrison's "Brown Eyed Girl" (15 million performances), and Elton John's "Your Song" (11 million performances) were presented Million-Air Awards. More at: bmi.com/award-shows/london-2023



▲ SULLIVAN BACK STAGE

Award-winning music journalist Jim Sullivan releases *Backstage & Beyond Volume 2: 45 Years of Modern Rock Chats & Rants*, with 300 pages of profiles including accounts of The Ramones, Sex Pistols, The Clash, The Fall, The Cure, The Cars, Morissey, and many more. Visit: bit.ly/3PDLhcX

Annual SESAC Awards

The Society of European Stage Authors and Composers (SESAC) held its annual celebration of songwriters and music publishers representing the most-performed songs of 2022 across various genres. This year's top honors went to Jack Harlow for Songwriter of the Year for "First Class" (his third year in a row) and Sony Music Publishing (SMP) for Publisher of the Year (their second year in a row). SMP received 12 awards in total for songs including "First Class" (Jack Harlow), "We Go Up" (Nicki Minaj and Fivio Foreign), "Count Me Out" (Kendrik Lamar), and "Mercury" (Steve Lacy).

Writing awards went to Daniel Lopatin (for work with The Weeknd), Dez (songs with Young Thug and Drake), and Jimmy Napes (songs with Sam Smith). Details at: sesac.com/2023-sesac-music-awards

Publishing Anomaly

Hitmakers Christian McCurdy (A&R, manager) and Nija Charles (three-time Grammy-nominated songwriter) have joined forces to launch their atypical publishing company, Anomaly, a boutique team working to support artists with full development from the ground up. Services include: branding, development, and studio time in their all-inclusive publishing deals.

The first three signees to the roster are producer Jack Rochon (with credits for H.E.R., Beyonce, 6lack, Daniel Caesar, French Montana, Ant Clemons), producer Serg Dior (with credits for Ant Clemons, Blxst, PNB Rock) and Tre'Von Waters (with credits for Chris Brown, Kiana Lede, K Camp).

ASCAP Hits The Hill

ASCAP recently rolled out its plans for "Stand With Songwriters" Advocacy Day and is urging lawmakers to protect music and human artistry as music navigates the expansion of artificial intelligence. Members including Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis, Matthew West, and Cirkut visited Washington alongside ASCAP Board members to make their concerns known. Following an ASCAP Foundation-sponsored annual "We Write the Songs" concert at the Library of Congress, the group met with lawmakers asking that they adhere to "six creative-centric principles." The principles center around prioritizing the rights and compensation for human creators, and ensuring they retain credit for their work.

ASCAP is encouraging members to contact their local representatives. More at: bit.ly/3EZ3jBk

Mondo Returns

International music and tech summit Mondo.NYC returns in its mission to empower artists and advance ideas in the evolving business and technology spaces. Founded in 2016 by Joanne Abbot Green and Bobby Haber, Mondo. NYC is both an annual event and platform for year-round in-pereson and online programming. Touching on the state of the industry, music supervision, management, creation, music tech, gaming, policy, finance, investment, production, touring, evenings included live showcases around Brooklyn and Manhattan.

With over 50 live panels and new software showcases for songwriters to leverage artificial intelligence and help their creative process, conversations included heavyweights Albhy Galuten, Martin Clancy, and David Hughes on the opportunity/apocalyptic potential of new tech.

The RIAA series returned to contemplate artificial intelligence, U.S. Policy developments, diversity in live music, and included a fireside chat with RIAA Chairman & CEO Mitch Glazier alongside GoDigital Media Group Founder and CEO Jason Peterson about market developments and AI innovation. The Music & Tech Law Symposium covered legal and business issues around touring, piracy and streaming fraud, the Metaverse/NFTs/Web3, generative AI, recent music litigation cases, and the rise in fractional music interests, and The Guild of Music Supervisors held an Education Event & Film festival. Details at: mondo.nyc

RIAA Honors

The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) celebrated Latin music dynamos Gloria Estefan, Sebastián Yatra, Emilio Estefan, Sony Music Latin's Maria Fernandez, and Congresswomen Maria Elvira Salazar and Veronica Escobar.

Gloria Estefan was honored with the RIAA Icon Award. Having sold over 100 million records worldwide, the eight-time GRAMMY winner, American Music Award Lifetime Achievement, and Gershwin Prize for Popular Song Award recipient, the singer-actress-songwriter has also written two New York Times best-selling children's books. Inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame (the first Hispanic woman to do so) earlier this year, following induction into the Latin Songwriters Hall of Fame, the philanthropist and humanitarian also received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2015 from President Obama.

ANDREA BEENHAM (aka Drea Jo) is a freelance writer and marketing consultant based in Southern California. The South-African born, Canadian-raised California transplant has a passion for music, people and fun. She can be reached at drea@dreajo.com

▲ WARNER RENEWS CASTA

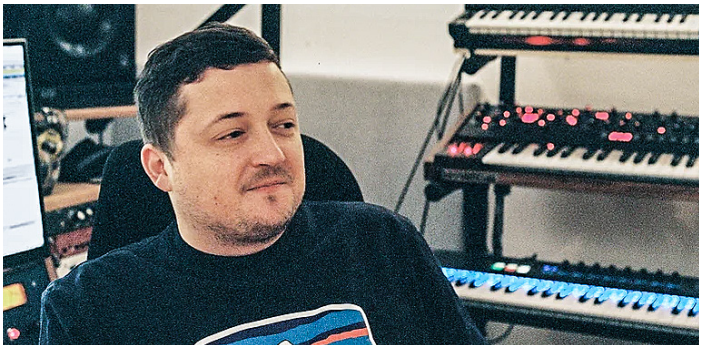
Partnering with BorderKid Publishing, Warner Chappell Music/WCM Colombia renew publishing with Colombian producer Casta, who co-produced 23x multi-platinum hit "Mamiii," "La Bachata" (Manuel Turizo). Credits include: Karol G, Becky G, Ricky Martin, Maluma, Ozuna, Zion y Lennox, Aitana, and more.

▲ WAVE FOR SLOAN

Primary Wave Music partners with the Estate of P.F.Sloan for publishing and writing shares for many of Sloan's hits, including "Eve of Destruction," "You Baby," "Secret Agent Man." He wrote for Barry McGuire, Herman's Hermits, The Mamas & the Papas, etc. and has many placements.

▲ ANGRY MOB RENEWS VERSKOTZI

Extending their 2019 agreement, Angry Mob's co-publishing deal with award-winning L.A. deejay-artist-songwriter-producer Joey Verskotzi (aka Verskotzi) encompasses current and future works (including 2024 album). Since his start in 2010, Verkotzi's placements include Chevy, ABC, NBC, Target, Volvo, and more.



▲ KEARNS TO POSITION

U.K. producer-songwriter Joe Kearns has signed worldwide publishing with Position Music. The BRIT nominee produced and has co-writing credits on Ellie Goulding's album *Brightest Blue*, as well as credits with Lukas Graham, Henry Moodie, Zara Larsson, IVE, Seeb, Monsta X, and others.

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Raye Zaragoza

Hold That Spirit

Making a name for herself as a political folk artist, Raye Zaragoza gained serious attention from 2016's "In The River" video (made with her brother) supporting the Dakota Access Pipeline protest. The song received over 100,000 views overnight, the 2017 Global Music Awards' Heretic Award for Protest/Activist Music, and an Honesty Oscar for Best Song. Zaragoza's writing continues to encourage conversations, with themes navigating social justice, womanhood, ageism, and racism.

Zaragoza and her best friend of 20 years began writing at their performing arts school in Manhattan in history class, using words and facts from textbooks and adding them to popular songs. Says Zaragoza, "That's where my love of songwriting started." Writing over 40 songs for Netflix's *Street Rangers* (featuring all Native American writers and cast) worked just like those early class assignments: she gets a script and facts to include, a deadline for turnaround, and then she's off and creating.

A lyricist and poet, she loves collaborating with strong melody writers (like Viv Parker, who co-wrote "Lost With You" and "Where I Want to Be"). Adds Zaragoza, "I love collaborating because I get to put it on my schedule. I love a good deadline—that's why I love sync."

Living on her own after high school, Zaragoza began experiencing anxiety and had trouble sleeping. She began writing songs to help her cope, and friends pushed her to start gigging, landing with a weekly spot at The Republic of Pie in North Hollywood, CA, for two hours every Tuesday for a year (with a slice of pie as payment). Her musical theatre background meant no stage fright and Zaragoza was constantly testing new material. She met the producer of her first EP at that gig and received a label offer while at the pie shop, but chose not to sign and instead bet on herself (she now operates independently through Patreon). After five years of gigs, one of her songs got online attention and her music career became full-time.

2022's publishing deal with Secret Road led to sync work with *Grey's Anatomy, NCIS,* and *Resident Alien*. With a father performing on Broadway, and a finance professor mother, Zaragoza combines creativity and financial acumen, crediting her adamantly scrappy touring attitude and ability to keep showing up to the fundamentals she was raised with. Finding management through her agent, she found her agent through a cold email and encourages artists to, "Never be afraid to ask—you never know who will respond."

Zaragoza considers all of her collaborators to be friends, stressing the importance of feeling comfortable getting vulnerable in writing sessions. Adding Secret Road to her team means Zaragoza now has people looking for collaborators she will click with, so that she can get right to it when they meet up.

Effective songwriting is about letting go. "We don't have time to be cute. You got a job, you got to fit it in," says Zaragoza. "I believe making music is my sacred path, but I also feel it holds you back if you're waiting for this perfect moment to create. While everyone else is waiting, I'm going to be over here scrambling and making my own moment."

Receiving the Rising Tide Award from the International Folk Music Awards (Folk Alliance International) in 2021, and having just completed her first headline tour on the heels of *Hold That Spirit* (showcasing exclusively female co-writers, engineers, and producers with themes around anxiety, hardship, and heartbreak), Zaragoza kicks off her role as Tiger Lily in *Peter Pan* next month.

Experience Raye Zaragoza at rayezaragoza.com
Contact Taylor Perry & Anna Denelsky, tperry@shorefire.com & adenelsky@shorefire.com

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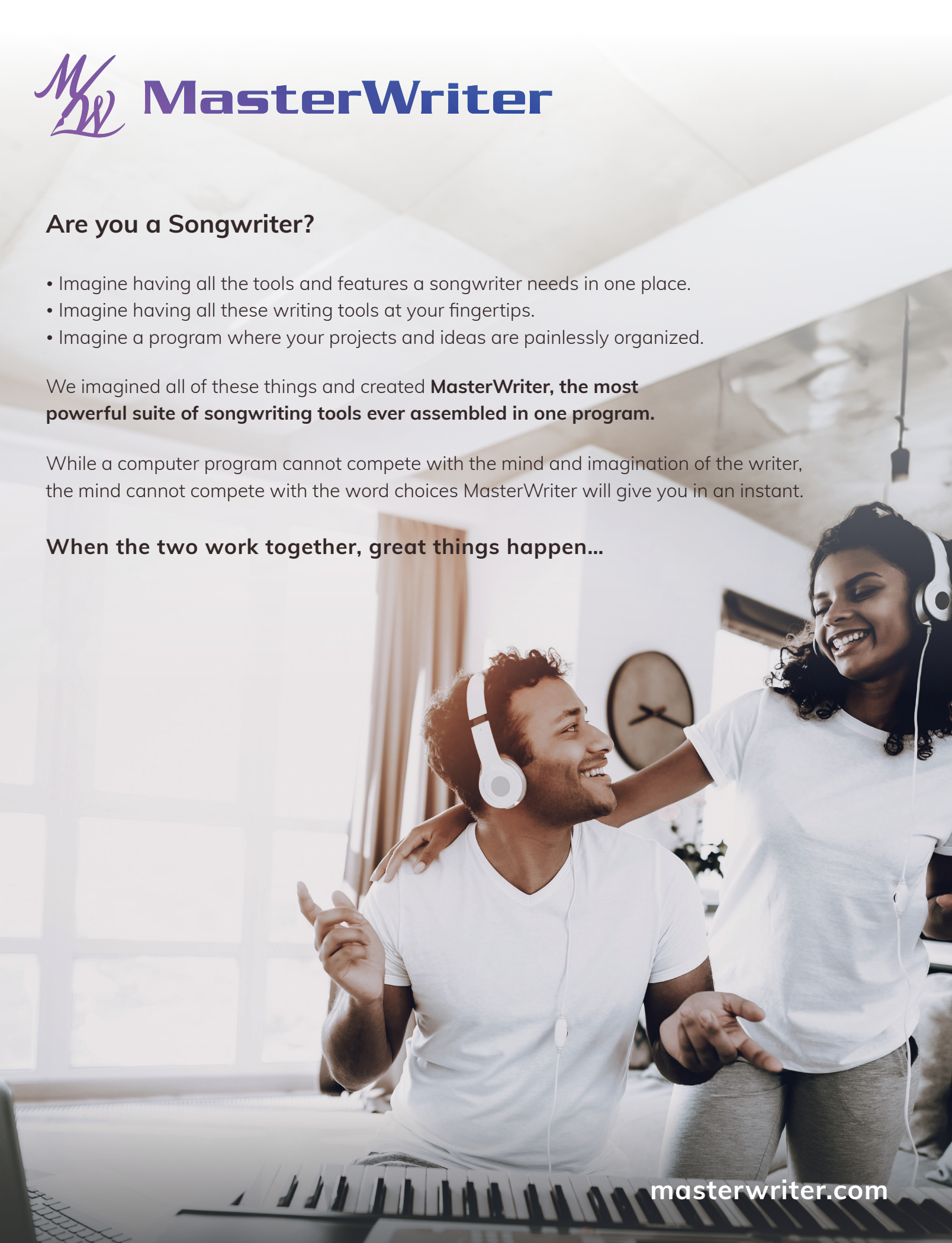

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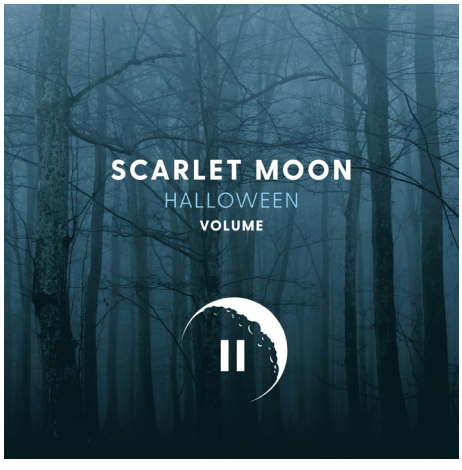
DROPS

Renaissance: A Film By Beyoncé will hit theaters Dec. 1 and tickets are available now. Following **Beyoncé's** groundbreaking world tour in support of her latest album, ***Renaissance,*** the film captures her journey, creativity and involvement in every aspect of the production from the tour's opening in Stockholm, Sweden, to its finale in Kansas City, MO. The artist's widely praised seventh album dropped this summer, and the forthcoming film will feature live concert footage and behind-the-scenes footage. Watch the trailer on YouTube and find tickets on Fandango. Contact Hannah Stamer at hstamer@id-pr.com for more information.



Scarlet Moon Records has released ***Scarlet Moon Halloween Volume II***, a collection of remixes featuring six tracks created by game composers. This year's volume includes arrangements by **Rozen (*Kena: Bridge of Spirits*, *Sins of Hyrule*)**, **Goomin "Nauts" Nam (*Ragnarok Online*, *DJMAX*)**, **Nami Nakagawa (vocalist on *NieR* series, *Demon Slayer*)** and more. Games featured include: ***Banjo-Kazooie*, *Final Fantasy XVI*, *The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask*, *Secret of Mana*** and ***Ragnarok Online*.** Listeners will get a 16-bit-style "demake" of the *Final Fantasy XVI* battle theme, **"Sixteen Bells,"** by **Frank van 't Ende**, a rendition of "Ceremony" from ***Secret of Mana***; an original *Ragnarok Online* composer (Goomin Nam) remixing music from *Ragnarok Online*; and the debut of newest Scarlet Moon Artists member **Nami Nakagawa** with an original work featuring numerous live players in an original song, **"Regret."** For more information, contact Jayson Napolitano at jayson@scarletmoonproductions.com.

In select theaters through Dec. 18, ***In the Court of the Crimson King*** is a new documentary film directed by **Toby Amies** about the cult rock band **King Crimson** that, through humor and sadness, tells the story of the band, which formed in London in 1968. Titled after the group's debut album, the film features **Adrian Belew, Sister Dana Benedicta, Bill Bruford, Mel Collins, Robert Fripp, Michael Giles, Trey Gunn, Gavin Harrison, Jakko Jakszyk, Tony Levin, Jamie Muir, Ian McDonald, Bill Rieflin, Peter Sinfield** and **Jeremy Stacey.** Contact crimsonking@mprm.com.

After collaborating with multiple Academy Award- and Grammy-winning composer **Hans Zimmer** to release a special reworking of their international hit single, indie pop band **Bastille** has released the official music video for **"Pompeii MMXXIII."** The rendition came about as frontman **Dan Smith** and Zimmer worked together on other projects. "Pompeii" is the lead single from the band's multi-million selling debut album ***Bad Blood,*** released in 2013 and charting at No. 2 in the U.K. It remains in the Top 50 most streamed songs of all time in the U.K. with over 3.5 billion streams. Ten years later, Bastille released an extended anniversary edition titled ***Bad Blood X*** of their breakout album, including three never-before-heard demos, two additional covers and a suite of live tracks. Watch the video on YouTube and contact taylor.vaughn@umusic.com.

Winner of the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities Documentary of the Year Award, ***Roots of Fire*** had its theatrical premiere in Los Angeles in September with opening night featuring directors **Abby Berendt Lavoi** and **Jeremy Lavoi**, and musicians **Jourdan Thibodeaux, Kelli Jones** and Grammy-winner **Joel Savoy.** With performances from the **Pine Leaf Boys, Feufollet, Jourdan Thibodeaux et Les Rôdailleurs, Bonsoir Catin, T'Monde, Anna Laura Edmiston** and **Roddie Romero,** the film honors the rich history and cultural legacy of Cajun music and considers its future as venues close their doors and the fan base ages. For further details, contact kelly.hargraves@firstrunfeatures.com.

A Haunting in Venice Original Motion Picture Soundtrack with music by composer **Hildur Guðnadóttir**, an Academy Award, Golden Globe, Emmy, two-time GRAMMY and BAFTA winner. The album is out on all digital platforms, featuring 10 tracks on which Guðnadóttir, in his words, imagined what it was like to write music before and after World War II—and the monumental political and societal shifts it created—as he approached the score. In addition, **Hollywood Records** has released an episode of its music docuseries, ***The Big Score***, in which Guðnadóttir discusses the score. Watch it on YouTube, and contact Sarah Roche at sarah@whitebearpr.com for details.

OPPS

Scholars have until Nov. 30 to submit proposals for the **11th North American Conference on Video Game Music**, which will take place March 16-17, 2024 at Michigan State University in East Lansing. The keynote speaker for this year's conference, which brings together people from around the world to discuss video game music, will be Laura Intravia. For submission guidelines, visit vgmconference.weebly.com/call-for-presentations1.html.

The NYC Women's Fund for Media, Music and Theatre is accepting applications through Nov. 1 for funding women-led projects related to film, television, theater and music. Funding categories include feature, documentary, music and theater production. Go to nyfa.org/awards-grants/nyc-womens-fund-for-media-music-and-theatre/ for the complete application guidelines.

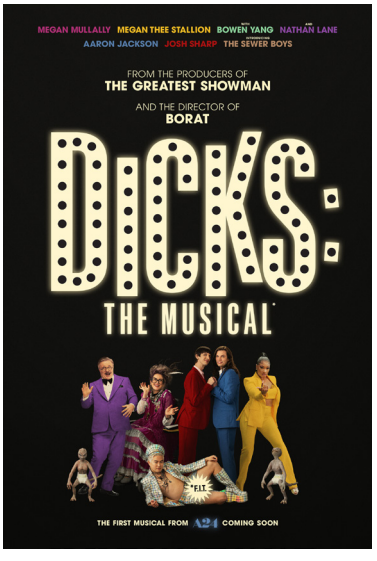
Submissions for the **2024 Contemporary Dance Choreography Fest**, which brings together emerging and established choreographers to present their work in Orlando, FL, will be open Nov. 15-Jan. 31. Submission rules and instructions can be found at cdcfest.com/submit-your-work.

PROPS

Now in their sixteenth year of graduating industry leaders, the **Nashville Film Institute**, flagged as a "top 25 film school," has recently added several new faculty members. Industry Pioneer and Clio Award winning Director **Billy Rainey**, who directed MTV's *The Real World* and who executive produced and directed *PUNK'D* with Ashton Kutcher, has joined the 2023 NFI faculty. Also new to the NFI faculty is super-indie Director and Producer **Scott W. McKinlay** (*Creep Van, GAG, BOIL, Ram Trucks*) and former Program Director, Los Angeles Film School and former Department Chair at Full Sail University, **Robert Perry**. Get more info about the Nashville Film Institute at nfi.edu and follow NFI on Instagram.

A24 has released its first-ever musical, ***Dicks: The Musical.*** It's a queer comedy film written by and starring **Joshua Sharp** and **Aaron Jackson**, and also starring **Megan Thee Stallion, Nathan Lane, Megan Mullally, Nick Offerman** and, of course, **Bowen Yang** as God. Directed by **Larry Charles (*Borat, Brüno, The Dictator*)**, the musical film was co-scored by **Marius de Vries (*Moulin Rouge!, La La Land*)** and **Karl Saint Lucy,** who wrote the music with Jackson and Sharp for the original stage play, ***Fucking Identical Twins,*** on which the movie is based. Acclaimed as an absurdist satire, *Dicks* is about two self-obsessed businessmen (Jackson and Sharp) who plot to reunite their divorced parents after discovering they're long-lost identical twins. Contact Jen Appel at jen@theoriel.co for more information.

This year, Emmy-nominated composer **Pinar Toprak** received the **Music City Maestro Award** for her contributions to the composing industry at the **Nashville Film Festival** along with the **Society of Composers and Lyricists.** With her work on ***Captain Marvel*** and ***Fortnite,*** Pinar is the first female composer to score both a film and video game with gross revenues of over $1 billion and $5 billion, respectively. She has also brought her musical chops a wide range of projects, including the new theme for Amazon Prime Video Sports, the soundtrack for Disney theme parks, including the new Epcot theme, **Christina Aguilera's** 2019 Xperience Live Show in Las Vegas, and conducting **Billie Eilish's** performance of **"No Time To Die"** at the 2022 Oscars ceremony. Contact Christian Endicio at christian@whitebearpr.com.



A new study shows that the series ***Purple Hearts*** is the most streamed **Netflix** soundtrack, with more than 238 million streams on Spotify and earning an estimated $567,077 in royalties. The most streamed song on the soundtrack is **"Come Back Home,"** which has more than 103 million streams alone. ***Tick, Tick... BOOM!*** is the second most popular Netflix soundtrack with more than 214 million Spotify streams, followed by ***Bridgerton Season Two (Covers)*** with more than 133 million streams. The study was conducted by **Headphonesty**, which analyzed every official soundtrack on Spotify from a Netflix original film or series and its royalty earnings. Learn more at headphonesty.com.

JESSICA PACE is a music journalist-turned-news-reporter based in Durango, CO. She is from Nashville, where she started a writing career by freelancing for publications including American Songwriter and *Music Connection*. Contact her at j.marie.pace@gmail.com.

OUT TAKE

Marius de Vries, Karl Saint Lucy

Composers

Web: mariusdevries.com
Contact: Jen Appel - jen@theoriel.co
Most Recent: *Dicks: The Musical*

Songs for A24's first-ever movie musical, *Dicks: The Musical*, were created by composers Marius de Vries (*Moulin Rouge!, La La Land*) and Karl Saint Lucy. Though a newcomer to film scoring, Saint Lucy wrote the music (with the film's directors and stars Aaron Jackson and Josh Sharp) for the original stage play *Fucking Identical Twins*, on which the movie is based.

De Vries, who met the film's directors years ago, says *Dicks* was one of the most fun projects he has ever worked on. In contrast to the absurdist plot and song lyrics, the musical score is classically orchestrated and true to what one would expect from an off-Broadway musical. "I think in the music department, Karl and I felt a quiet responsibility to be the grownups in the room. We felt the compositional arrangement and execution had to have a real sincerity and act as the skeletal support for all the craziness of the film. We wanted to play it straight with the music," de Vries says.

Saint Lucy says the biggest challenge of co-writing the music was that the experience was a first for him. "I'd done limited symphonic arranging, but this was a very hands-on experience and Marius was gracious in giving me a chance at orchestrating songs," he says. "We can feel starved for opportunities that fit, and I'm so grateful my first piece gets to be something that's so 'me.'"

De Vries' advice to aspiring composers is not to enter a project with lukewarm feelings: "Only do it if you must. It should be an inescapable imperative in your life, where the alternative is so terrible to contemplate, you have no choice. Then you're qualified. You need that level of obsession to drive you through the times when it's not working."

Saint Lucy says: "When I first signed on to *Fucking Identical Twins*, I was just working with my friends who I was doing comedy with. If I did something right, it's that I said 'yes' at a time when I was very broke and in no position to take on a creative investment. Really think about who you can see yourself working with in the long run, and make your career about developing those relationships." ▪

▶ LOUDER THAN LIFE

Louder Than Life has retained its title of the Biggest Rock Festival In North America after 180,000 fans attended the Highland Festival Grounds At Kentucky Exposition Center in Louisville. The four-day event hosted 100 bands on five stages with memorable performances from Foo Fighters, Tool, Avenged Sevenfold, Green Day (pictured), Weezer, Godsmack, Run the Jewels and more.

▲ JULAI AND THE SEROTONES

Bridgeport, CT band Julai and the Serotones are made up of: T.J. Debicella (drums) and Brad Griffith (guitar), William Durant (guitar), Tom Pelton (trumpet, keys), Pete McEachern (alto, soprano sax), Keegan Smith (tenor sax), Nick Lenz (bass guitar), and the incredible Julai on lead vocals. The group opened their hometown Sound on Sound Festival this fall, sharing the bill with Trey Anastasio, John Mayer, Alanis Morissette and Red Hot Chili Peppers.

◀ AMERICAN IDOL'S HUNTERGIRL

American Idol runner-up and vocal powerhouse HunterGirl gave her hometown a special, private viewing of the heart-stirring official music video to her debut single "Ain't About You" at the Oldham Theater in Winchester, TN. Along with a private, acoustic performance, the sold-out event raised over $6,000 for the Isaiah 117 House, a local charity that provides foster children awaiting placement a loving and safe home.

▲ THE ROXY AT 50

Councilman John Heilman (left) is pictured with legendary club owner Lou Adler (right), declaring September 20 as "Roxy 50th Day" in the City Of West Hollywood, commemorating 50 years of The Roxy's iconic presence and impact on The Sunset Strip.

– JOSEPH MALTESE *josephm@musicconnection.com*

▲ U2:UV ACHTUNG BABY

U2—(l-r): The Edge, Bono, Bram van den Berg, Adam Clayton—lit up the Sphere stage on the opening night of their highly-anticipated U2:UV Achtung Baby Live at Sphere shows, with the launch of the fully immersive experience featuring an awe-inspiring art-and-tech showcase, all while performing on a Brian Eno-inspired turntable stage.

◀ BURNING SPEAR DESTROYS SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAIN SOL FESTIVAL

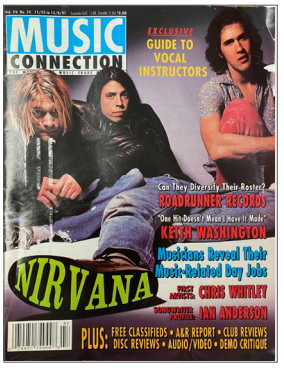
Burning Spear headlined the three-day Santa Cruz Mountain Sol Festival in support of his long awaited album *No Destroyer*. Headliners for the first two nights of this jam packed "festival in the forest" were Jewel and Ben Harper. Pictured backstage (l-r): Burning Spear and guest guitarist Hal Henkel.

▶ SKUNK AND BLACK

Rock and Roll Hall of Famer Jeff "Skunk" Baxter and country star Clint Black got together on a tune called "Bad Move," now getting recognition on country radio. The two met up and performed the tune live for the first time at Black's recent visit to recording facilities in Escondido, CA.

MUSIC CONNECTION

Tidbits From Our Tattered Past



1991-Nirvana-#24

In our interview with Kurt Cobain (just six weeks after his now legendary trio had released their debut album), he had this to say about Nirvana's out-of-the-box success: "Since we've been on this tour we haven't been aware of how popular we've become. The only way we can find out is when our manager tells us. And he lies a lot. In fact, we suspect this is just a big scam and we've probably only sold about 40,000 records."

2015-B.O.B-#10

Artist B.O.B offered no shortage of insights and advice for *MC* readers. "When it comes to art," he said, understand the difference between art and the business of art and it will resolve a lot of conflicts that an aspiring artist might have." Also in this issue is a profile of producer Damion Young (Garbage, Collective Soul) and Simon Perry, Head of A&R at Reverbnation.

Greta V

BY ERIC HARABADIAN

From their humble Mid-Michigan beginnings, Greta Van Fleet have steadily become a mainstay on the global rock & roll landscape. From their start in 2012, brothers Josh Kiszka (lead vocals); Jake Kiszka (guitar/backup vocals); Sam Kiszka (bass/keyboards/backup vocals) created a unified style forged in classic rock that has caught the attention and favor of such luminaries as Robert Plant and Elton John. When friend and drummer-backup vocalist Danny Wagner came on board in 2013, it's been all systems go, with a trail of multiple awards and sellout concerts in their wake. We recently sat down with the insightful Wagner to get his take on the new album and the band's epic journey thus far.

Music Connection: As we're doing this interview, you're playing Washington, D.C., tonight and you just played Little Caesar's Arena in Detroit a couple days ago. How did it feel to play for a home state crowd and see family?

Danny Wagner: It was beautiful. The entire day was completely surreal. I set my own personal record for longest amount of time with goose bumps leading up to the show. But the show was a success and we had so much fun seeing family and friends. It was so great having them all in one place.

MC: How did you all come about working with *Starcatcher* producer Dave Cobb?

Wagner: It was almost inevitable at some point that we'd end up doing a project with him. The story of us meeting him actually dates back to the first album we recorded, *Anthem of the Peaceful Army.* We were recording that in Nashville where he was recording at the time and he actually popped into the studio one day during our tracking. We were all very young and we had the chance to meet him. And at the time we knew of him because of the Rival Sons who we were all huge fans of. And the man has worked with so many incredible acts.

And then we met him a couple other times just hanging around Nashville. We were just waiting for the right moment, and he was always on our radar. But we wanted to make sure that us, the music we had and the position we were in, were equally as ready to make that leap into working with him, because we knew it would be a big leap. And over the pandemic we met him one more time and it was kind of off to the races.

We met him at RCA Studios and he had instruments set up for us to come in and jam on, just keeping the meeting organic. And we started jamming and it was like someone stuck a rock and water just flowed. It was amazing, and we quickly realized it was a fantastic fit. And three or four of those jamming moments, Dave actually took the live versions and stuck them on the album. When we went back a couple of months later, agreeing to start the album, we already had a couple of the songs underway. That's one of his famous tricks. He captures bands at their most vulnerable and most natural states which I think is incredible.

MC: So, he wanted to catch you in more of an impromptu state, with no filters?

Wagner: Yes. The type of music we grew up listening to is just so organic and human. It's tough to find that in yourself in such a modern-day recording setting, because everything can be bandaged up. Movie magic can be transferred to music and there's musical magic. And there are all sorts

an Fleet

PHOTOS BY NEIL KRUG

of things you can do. So, he really captured us in our most honest state, which I thought was special. I feel this new album represents us as human beings and as writers and musicians in our most human state.

MC: I listened to a podcast recently and Jake talked about your playing and writing process. He said it was all very instinctual, so what you're saying makes sense.

Wagner: It certainly does. And to an extent, we've been known to have that instinctual writing. From the very minute this band formed we were off to the races as far as the four of us collaborating and writing. It came so naturally, and that's what started igniting the fire for us personally. We realized we could do this and started producing songs left and right all the time.

MC: Talk a little more in depth about the writing process behind the new album?

Wagner: On this new album we only went with a couple of songs pre-written, and not even completed, really. We basically went into the album with nothing, no preparation. We wanted to capture some of the magic in the studio. And, I say, mission accomplished! It came together intuitively and instinctually and very flawlessly, to be honest.

MC: Tell me about the concept behind *Starcatcher*. I was reading that there are references to fantasy vs. reality and spirituality as well. What's it all about?

Wagner: The easiest way to describe the album is to break it down into two parts. Sonically, we covered a little bit of that. We really wanted to go back to our roots, so to speak. We wanted to go back to those early days and harness what got us into rock & roll and music in general. We tried to capture that sound, which involves recording live in a room, and creating a feeling in a song by playing it, not just adding all these little effects. We wanted to emotionally deliver that in performance. And thematically, we've spent the past few albums in the last few years creating a world in which we live in the Greta Van Fleet universe, expanding on these concepts and themes we've talked about over the last few years.

For instance, *The Battle at Gardens Gate* was almost a sequel to the first in a way, where the first album laid some groundwork and *The Battle at Gardens Gate* started introducing figures and characters and landscapes. With this current album we wanted to represent the dichotomy of all of it—the fantasy and reality, the love and hate, and just play with the dichotomies of these wide ends of the spectrum and everything in between.

MC: What about your lyrics?

Wagner: I can't always speak for all of the lyricism, because we like to leave things up to interpretation, if you will. And I think that's a beautiful thing. I love when I can hear a piece of work and I can have my own interpretation of it and can discuss with someone else their own interpretation of a song. That really gets things going. But, loosely, we wanted to capture this incredible dichotomy that's relatable to the world we live in.

MC: So you have those kinds of personal conversations with fans where, in addition to, perhaps, comments on your drumming or guitar solos, they approach you to discuss the lyrical content of songs?

Wagner: Absolutely. Right after the first few singles had been released. Just walking around towns and meeting certain people, they immediately gravitated to those types of conversations. I found it incredibly endearing as an artist that it goes beyond just the surface of what they're hearing. And in a day and age where I feel like our ability to focus is just diminished quite a little bit, that means

a lot. Shorter songs seem more stomachable and record labels are pushing for that surface-level two–minute song. So, it's really cool to have these in-depth conversations with fans and what the songs mean to them. And then they ask what they mean to us. The lyrical content tends to take on its own meaning. Sometimes I'm shocked to hear their interpretations, where I have to step back and say, wow, I never even thought of things that way. But it totally makes sense and is not that far off from the main idea.

MC: You're currently on tour. How do you write on the road and find the time to do it?

Wagner: So, the one fun thing about us is we never stop writing, ever! And it's a blessing, because we have endless ideas and it comes from all four corners of this band. We basically take every opportunity we have with instruments because there is often limited time when you're always traveling.

On show days we have a room that is dedicated to creativity, warm-ups and rehearsals. It's filled with every instrument we'd need. On a typical show day we show up and do sound check. After that we've got about six hours before a show. So, we'll find that room and get ourselves grounded—not even playing fully fledged ideas, but just loose ideas we'll come back to at another time. We never block off time in our schedule for writing. It just all comes naturally in various different places.

MC: What are you currently listening to, and what bands, in your opinion and besides you guys, are carrying that rock & roll torch?

Wagner: That's a fantastic question. Our music tastes are so eclectic and vast that it's shocking to people. They think we're just a rock & roll band and assume that's all we listen to. But we're really all over the place. We're constantly trying to seek out older and more independent acts, because a lot of it was just lost in time. Personally I'm a massive folk listener. There are a couple artists I've been listening to lately. One of them is Laura Marling. She just released an album this year. I've always been a Fleet Foxes fan and they continue to release a lot of music.

More in the rock & roll vein, there's this band out of Detroit called Mac Saturn, and it's cool because their upbringing shares a lot of parallels with ours. They're doing their first album at the same studio in Royal Oak, Michigan with the same crew and people. And that's how we met them, through the same producers and people who got us running. They're awesome guys and their music is incredible. And they have this amazing stage presence, which I think is an incredible art in itself.

You hear a lot of music, and if you're hooked on the music it's great. But, when their show blows your mind, then that's just something super special. But them, First Aid Kit and Rival Sons all are contenders for holding that flag for the rock & roll march. Rock & roll is very far from dead and diminished. It's ever present and riding its own groove in the shadows at the moment. A lot of these bands are able to tour the world and sell out theaters and arenas. It's incredible to see and it speaks for itself. It's very much alive and well.

MC: It's very nice to hear someone like you in your position saying this, because there are a lot of naysayers out there. What you say is hopeful.

Wagner: Well, it's nice to hear from someone like you, as well. You do kinda feel like you're in your own universe or niche, if you will. It almost seems like a rock & roll fanbase requires a slightly higher attention span because the music is much more in depth. You're not spoon fed, so to speak. We live in this world where we're not always everywhere, but we are at the same time.

> "We never block off time in our schedule for writing. It just all comes naturally in various different places."

MC: You must have a very special relationship with your record label that gives you the freedom to create as you have?

Wagner: Absolutely. And, historically, I'm talking 40 or 50 years ago, there've been nightmare stories of rock & roll bands and their labels. It's always been a tricky dynamic between the industry and the musicians themselves. So, naturally, as we were exploring and ready to take that next step years and years ago, we all had a bit of hesitation with record labels. We didn't want to sacrifice all of our creative control. That was something that terrified us because we wouldn't be who we are without our creative control. But, fortunately, we've been blessed with a good relationship with our record label and they have been incredibly supportive.

They've shown up to the studio when we're recording. One terrifying but comforting example of that was when we were recording *Battle of Gardens Gate* they had the record label come out before the songs were finished. We played the first six songs or so. And one of them, "The Weight of Dreams," was nine-plus minutes long, with guitar solos that go on forever. And, to us, it's this expression of energy and it captures our live essence. And [the label rep) sat down in a chair and said, "That is fantastic! That's rock & roll!" And we were thinking hopefully they're not coming in expecting us to have 2:45-minute songs. We do have a couple shorter songs. We try to provide a little bit of all of it. But, yeah, it is quite a blessing to have a relationship with our label to maintain creative control to pursue our passion in writing.

MC: You've been a consistent entity as a band since 2012, survived a pandemic, and are now picking up momentum with a current tour. What are your secrets for making it all work?

Wagner: That's a fantastic question. I think what keeps us going is the ability to travel to so many different demographics and fan groups across the globe, and meet so many different types of people. And they all share the same love for what we do. We feel their energy and we take that and put it back out into the world. It goes so much further than people think. In a world of darkness, criticism, technology and social networking it's really amazing to get out in person and play these shows for real people.

But, also, it took a few years to kind of get used to it. It essentially went from a very home-based lifestyle—in high school with our regimens and routine—to traveling the world and having zero schedule. All of a sudden you're thrown into a lot of situations where you had to grow up a lot quicker than you thought. It's a very different lifestyle, especially with eyes on you at all times and anxiety is very high most of the time. But after a few years of doing it it started to become all that we knew.

MC: What was the process to adjust?

Wagner: You just become accustomed to being on the road. It's also about being adaptable and being able to listen to what you need at all times. It's okay to be a little selfish on the road, because you have to take care of yourself. I need to go to bed at this time. I might not wanna stay up and hang

Quick Facts

- Kyle Hauck was the original drummer for GVF from 2012-2013. He also came up with their name.
- GVF has been nominated three times for a Grammy Award.
- GVF won a Grammy Award in 2019 for the EP *From the Fires*.
- Their latest album *Starcatcher* debuted at No. 8 on the Billboard 200.
- To date, GVF has released two EPs and three studio albums.

out with the other people who are doing what they need at the moment. So, it's a lot about listening to what you need and there's a lot of trust involved, too. At the end of the day I am very happy to be out on tour. I live for the chaos and I love it!

MC: Live for the chaos. That sounds like a song title (laughs)!

Wagner: It might be. I liked the way that came out.

MC: What regions around the world seem to really respond to your band?

Wagner: It's interesting to learn, as you're traveling the world and doing shows, there are a lot of different countries that share certain genres of music as their favorites. There was the whole British Invasion thing in London and the U.K. And they've always liked rock & roll. So, it wasn't surprising that the first time we went over there we did decently well.

But there were some interesting countries that seemed random at the time, but make sense, like Italy. We'd go over to Europe and do these month-long tours and it was always Italy where we were able to seek out much larger venues than some other countries. South America is another one. They love music, in general, and it doesn't have to be just rock & roll. They just love live music. We've done a bunch of Lollapaloozas down there and the fans will follow you to the gates sometimes at airports. It's crazy, almost like Beatlemania down there.

MC: Is there anything else we haven't covered?

Wagner: We're just very thankful for the support we've gotten for the new record. We were at a vulnerable state in recording it. And it's a very personal record for us. So, thank you to everyone that's taken it under their wing and to dive into the lyricism and given it so much life. But, also keep an eye out for what's next because we're constantly writing. It almost seems like we're a year ahead of everyone else in the world.

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What You Should Know About MUSIC PUBLISHING

By Kris Hawkins

Music publishing is easily one of the most important aspects of the music business—but also one of the most misunderstood. To begin to understand what music publishing is and how it works, the first thing you need to understand is what copyright is and how it pertains to music.

Copyright

Copyright in its most basic form is how you prove ownership of a "work." A "work" can be anything from a screenplay, a book, a piece of art, or in a musician's case, a song. A work is considered protected under copyright law when it is fixed in a tangible form of expression. Meaning, when you write it down, record it, or print it out, in that moment it becomes protected and belongs to you. And will belong to you for the rest of your life plus seventy years. After which it becomes what's known as public domain.

When a work becomes public domain, anyone can recreate and distribute it without having to obtain permission. Music such as Beethoven, Mozart, and Bach are all considered public domain. However, what you cannot do is sample another artist's recording of a piece of music; while the song may be public domain, the recording may not be. This is because there is another copyright at play with the sound recording of a work.

When dealing with music and copyright it's important to understand that there are two copyrights involved; the first is the song you write, (the "song itself"). The second is the recording of the song, sometimes referred to as the "master." If you write and record your own music, congratulations you own both copyrights. If you're signed to a label, or someone paid for your recordings, chances are that they own the master.

Master Use License

A quick sidenote about the master recording. If you want to license your music for a movie, television show, or advertisement, you will need to obtain a master use license as well as a sync license (see below). If you own your own masters, this is relatively easy. If you have signed some form of record deal, the label will have control of it. The fee for usage of the master will typically go to the owner of the recording as well.

Sync Licenses

The other type of license needed for film, television, advertising, and video games is known as a sync license. Synchronization or sync is the process of combining music with some form of moving imagery. These licenses are worked out between your music publisher and the producer or music supervisor of a project.

The rates for a sync license vary depending on a few factors, such as how popular your song is, how it will be used within the project (background, main title, end credits, etc.), or how much of the song they use (just the verse or the entire work).

The music publisher will collect these fees and distribute them to the songwriters, usually for a negotiated fee.

What is Considered a Music Copyright

Copyright with music typically refers to the melody and the lyric. A beat, chord progression, or rhythm isn't considered protected, although recent lawsuits have challenged this idea. More specifically, the "Blurred Lines" v. "Got to Give it Up" lawsuit, where it was determined that "Blurred Lines" did infringe on the copyright of Marvin Gaye's "Got to Give it Up." Even though there was no melody or lyric overlap.

Because of this ruling, a huge number of lawsuits have been filed against major artists like Katy Perry, Taylor Swift, and most recently Ed Sheeran, making the longstanding rule of melody and lyric only a little grayer.

Co-writes and Copyright

If you are collaborating with other songwriters or writing with your band, the copyright and ownership is normally split evenly among all of the writers. Some situations, like if you're a new writer collaborating with an established artist, you may receive a smaller share of the ownership. This should be discussed before-hand to avoid any miscommunications or hurt feelings.

What happens if you co-write a song with someone you have a falling out with, and you want to use your lyrics to write another song? Due to the way copyright law works, the moment you put your lyrics to someone's music, it is considered "fixed in a tangible form" and cannot be undone.

I'll put it this way: If you are baking a cake with your friend, they bring the eggs, and you bring the flour. Once you combine the two ingredients you've created something new. And it's impossible to take your ingredients back once they have been "baked" together.

It's important that you understand this concept when deciding to collaborate with another writer.

Music Publishers

So, what is a music publisher and what do they do? A music publisher is an entity that represents your music. The main job of a publisher is to get your music earning you money commercially. A good publisher will work to get your music placed in things like movies, television shows, video games, commercials, etc. Which will then generate revenue for the songwriters (and the publishers) via licenses and royalties.

A publisher will also handle the administration of your music, which is: registering your songs with your performing rights organization (ASCAP, BMI, etc.), negotiating and collecting any licensing fees or royalties (both performance and mechanical) for getting your music used commercially, handling distribution and reproduction rights, as well as handling any printed sheet music that may be created.

Do you need a Publisher?

Short answer: yes, absolutely.
Long answer: kinda, but still yes.

While a publisher is generally a third party that represents your music, you can act as your own publisher. And I would advise you to do so until you are represented by a third party. To do this, when you register with your performing rights organization you have the option to sign up as either a "writer" or a "publisher." I advise you to do both. Currently, the cost to do so is negligible.

The downside of acting as your own publisher is that you become responsible for all the administrative tasks that a publisher would perform. Unless you're well versed in all the ins and outs of how music publishing and licenses work, this could be slightly overwhelming. Even if you don't fully understand everything, you still should sign up. You can always assign your publishing to a third party later. But it's best to be ready should an opportunity arise.

Co-writers and Multiple Publishers

Chances are, if you are co-writing with different writers, they will have their own publishing company that represents them. In some cases, it can be as many as five or six publishers associated with one song. As you can imagine, this could cause issues with licensing opportunities as all the publishers need to agree to give permission.

The way this is normally solved is one publisher is chosen as the administrator to act on behalf of all the other publishers and make decisions in the best interests of all involved. This should be decided on sooner than later. Otherwise, it's like herding cats.

Performing Rights Organizations

As mentioned previously, a performing rights organization, or PRO, is an organization that will collect any performance royalties from your music when it is played or performed in a public venue. This could be television, radio, clubs, or the grocery store. Every time your music is publicly broadcast, your PRO will collect the royalty money and distribute it equally among the writers and publishers the song is registered to. The rates of the royalties vary depending on the medium that the music is being used for. (That's a discussion for another article.) Every country has at least one PRO that provides this service. In the U.S. the big three are ASCAP, BMI, and SESAC. If you are a songwriter or composer and you want to make a living from your music, you need to be registered with a PRO. ASCAP and BMI are available to anyone who wants to join. SESAC is the outlier, as you must be invited. If this is all new to you, and you are writing your own music, I urge you to sign up as soon as you can.

Royalty Distribution

Here's a quick breakdown of how royalties are distributed through your PRO. The first thing to understand is that a song in and of itself is worth 100% (200% if you're with BMI) of the performance royalties it generates. However, that 100% when collected is split into two equal shares known as the "writers share" and the "publishers share." What this means is that the money earned from the use of the song will be split evenly between the writer and the publisher. So, if $1,000 in performance royalties is collected, $500 will go to the writer's share, while the other $500 will go to the publisher's share.

If you are self-publishing your music, you will receive all the royalties. If you have signed a publishing deal, this may change depending on the deal and any advances you may receive.

Mechanical Royalties

While performance royalties are collected and allocated by your PRO, another type of royalty you should familiarize yourself with is the mechanical royalty.

A mechanical royalty is generated though the reproduction of a song via either the creation and sale of a physical copy, such as vinyl or a CD (not so much anymore), or digital formats such as streaming and digital downloads.

These royalties are collected and paid to the publisher by organizations like the Harry Fox Agency, the Mechanical Licensing Collective, or Songtrust.

With streaming, there has been some debate about what is considered a mechanical royalty vs. a performance royalty. And who collects what. To understand it almost requires an advanced degree in mathematics. Here's an oversimplified explanation:

Permanent downloads of a song are considered a mechanical royalty. Non-interactive streaming, meaning you don't choose the music but listen to an online radio station like Pandora, is considered a performance royalty. Concerning On-Demand or interactive streaming such as Spotify, Apple Music, and Amazon, the royalty is split between a performance royalty collected by your PRO and a mechanical royalty collected by your publisher. If you are an independent artist, you can use a service like Tunecore, CD Baby, or Distrokid to collect your streaming mechanicals.

Publishing Deals

A publishing deal is when you assign a portion of your copyright (publisher's share) to a third-party. Your new publisher will now handle administrative tasks, such as registering your songs or securing licensing for film, television, or video games. They will also collect any royalties that your music may be entitled to, such as performance royalties and mechanical royalties from physical sales and streaming.

Signing a publishing deal is like giving power of attorney to the publisher to make decisions on your behalf. Which is why it's very important to know two things; 1.) What kind of deal are you signing, its terms and conditions, and 2.) Is the publisher willing to put in the effort to exploit your music?

There are a few different types of publishing deals that can be offered, so it is important for you to know what you're getting into before you sign your rights away.

Admin Deals

An admin deal is the type of deal that concerns handling all the administrative tasks of your music. For a small percentage of the income, your administrators will collect royalties and help with licenses. This is normally around 5% - 20% of the revenue.

Admin deals typically don't come with an advance (although some may). They also won't provide some of the creative services that a co-publishing deal or a traditional publishing deal would provide. They are, however, a good choice if you want to retain full ownership of your copyrights. These deals are most common with well-established writers and artists who don't need as much promotion for their music as, say, an up-and-coming writer.

Co-Publishing Deals

A co-publishing deal (also referred to as a songwriter deal) is when you assign a portion of your copyright to a third party. Most co-pub deals take half of your publisher's share. You will retain all of your writer's share and the other half of your publisher's share, thus giving you an opportunity to make more money off any royalties your music makes. You may also receive an advance against any future royalties. More on this later.

Be aware that some publishing deals also have an admin fee baked into the deal. Which could mean that you are paying an extra 10% of your royalty for the publisher to administer your music. This is sometimes written into the fine print of the deal. You can always ask a potential publisher if they charge an admin fee on top of your earnings.

Traditional Publishing Deal

With a traditional publishing deal, you will assign the entirety of your publishers share to the publisher, giving them full control over your copyright. These types of deals are usually accompanied by a much larger advance. With both types of these deals, the publisher will perform all of the duties that you would receive with an admin deal, with the added benefit of providing creative services. These services could be anything from pitching your music to advertisers, television shows, and video games. Larger publishers will have a greater ability to get your music in more places than you could do on your own. You may also receive a substantial advance for your deal, as well. These are all good things about signing a deal like this. However, there is a trade-off when you take such a deal.

Advances

While receiving a large sum of money upfront for your publishing may seem enticing, one thing most people don't understand is that an advance on a publishing deal is essentially like a loan. And that loan has to be recouped. The publisher is taking a chance that they will make their advance back from future royalties your music generates. The way this happens is through the collection of your royalties. More specifically, your writer's share.

If you receive a $100,000 advance from your publisher, the publisher will use the royalties from your writers share to pay down the advance. What this means is that you will not earn any new money from your music until your advance is fully recouped. The good news is that unlike a personal loan, if you fail to recoup your advance, you're not obligated to pay it back out of pocket, unless you sign a very bad deal.

Failure to recoup, though, could harm your chances of receiving another publishing deal in the future. It will ultimately boil down to two things. One, is having a consistent and marketable collection of music and two is how hard the publisher works to get your music to generate income.

Quotas

Some publishing deals will require you to deliver a quota of songs per each year that you are signed with them. The average is between 10 to 20 songs. However, co-writes typically will only count for the percentage of ownership that you have. If you co-write a song and have only 50% ownership, then that only counts as half a song towards your quota.

Music Libraries and Publishing

Music libraries have been around for decades. Recently, however, there has been a sharp uptick in the number of libraries available and the content of their catalogs.

A music library is an entity that has hundreds of songs and instrumental pieces for use for sync purposes. If you decide to become affiliated with a music library, they will act as your defacto publisher, handling any licenses needed and collecting money from royalties and sync fees.

In most music library deals, they will take all of the publishing and split any sync fees with the writers associated with the tracks being used. Some deals may vary, depending on the library.

It is always important to look over any agreements you may be presented with and ask questions about anything you don't understand. If they are unwilling to give you a straight answer, it may be time to find another deal.

How Do You Get a Publishing Deal?

Easier said than done. If you're writing with an established artist or producer, and getting your songs released commercially or are earning royalties on your songs already via ads, video games and the like, that is a huge advantage that most publishers would jump at.

However, if you are still trying to establish yourself as a writer or an artist, the three most important things you will need are great songs—a lot of them—and the connections. If you're serious about getting a deal, you will need to write every day. Know that not everything you write will be good. Regardless, finish even the bad ones, as it opens up the channel for the good ones to come through. Collaborate with as many writers and artists as you can. It's a numbers game. For reference, while choosing the songs to record for Michael Jackson's classic album *Thriller*, Quincy Jones listened to 800 songs to get nine. Six of which became top 10.

For the connections, you need to be where the publishers are. While the internet is a great resource to find opportunities, joining societies like The SCL (Society of Composers and Lyricists), ASCAP, or BMI and going to their in-person events can open lots of potential doors for your career.

And In Conclusion...

Music publishing is an onion with many complex layers to it. My hope is that this article has helped shed some light on some of the more misunderstood concepts. If you're interested in more information about making a living as a musician, check out my book; *The Working Musician's Handbook for Professional Success.*

KRIS HAWKINS is an EMMY winning music producer, award winning educator, and author of *The Working Musician's Handbook for Professional Success*. See krishawkinsmusic.com/book

"One of LA's Temples of Sound"

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Austrian Audio MiCreator Studio

Austrian Audio's MiCreator Studio combines an audio interface and high-quality microphone into a high-quality, flexible, pocket-sized, USB-C recording system. The primary target audience for MiCreator Studio is musicians and instrumentalists who want a simple way to capture content on the go. MiCreator Studio is designed to be easy to use and can deliver great-sounding recordings in a wide variety of recording environments. Mi Creator Studio's class compliant plug-and-play design makes it a great solution for capturing content on a mobile device such as an iPad Pro, especially now that Apple has released Logic for iPad. MiCreators Studio's simple plug-and-play design and USB-C connectivity make mobile recording easy and virtually eliminates the need for additional cables or recording equipment to capture your content.

MiCreator Studio features a retro modern design built around a durable full-metal housing. Austrian Audio's MiCreator Studio is ergonomically designed to be placed on a desktop or on a microphone stand. MiCreator Studio's capsule is mounted on a flexible swivel mount that optimizes the recording angle when MiCreator Studio is placed flat on your desktop.

The MiCreator Studio capsule is supported in its own suspension system, which doubles as a built-in shock mount. MiCreator's flexible tilt mechanism allows vertical adjustment of the microphone capsule for ideal positioning when MiCreator is laid flat on your desktop. You also get breakout cables for connecting the MiCreator Satellite Microphone or other line inputs.

MiCreator Studio is built from quality components and is designed to be capable of handling higher SPL levels than competing USB microphones currently on the market. MiCreator Studio features intuitive onboard controls and can be set up for mono or stereo recording via MiCreator's additional input. This allows for quick and easy multitracking and optional true stereo recording with flexible mic placement with the optional available MiCreator Satellite microphone and T bar connector.

MiCreator is designed around a fixed cardioid pattern frequency range 20 Hz to 20 kHz, and a 108 dB dynamic range. MiCreator Studio can handle up to 130 dB, which means it can be used to capture just about any sound source you can think of including drums, rehearsals, and so on. While MiCreator Studio is optimized for vocals, it can via the included breakout cables be used to directly capture line level instruments such as guitars or keyboards. MiCreator Studio can record up to 48 kHz 24-bit resolution with near zero latency.

"A very well-thought-out product and offers a unique form to function that I have not seen in any other competing product in this category."

As mentioned earlier, MiCreator Studio has a second input for connecting a second input device for stereo recording. Austrian Audio also offers MiCreator satellite microphone and an optional MiCreator y-Lav lavalier microphone for interviews or podcasting. The MiCreator features two headphone inputs. A breakout TRRS to TRS Instrument cable included for directly connecting and recording keyboard, guitar and bass. MiCreator Studio comes with two red accessory interchangeable face places (for both MiCreator Studio and MiCreator Satellite).

MiCreator Studio features Austrian Audio Open Acoustic Technology and a fixed Cardioid capsule design. The front of MiCreator Studio has a minimalist yet functional design that features a hardware mute switch, level meter, two-stage input pad, and a large jog wheel to control monitoring and overall output levels. MiCreator Studio features a class compliant USB connection, no additional drivers required. The back of MiCreator Studio features two TRRS jacks, one for input and output and for connecting one or two headphones.

Overall, MiCreator Studio is a very well-thought-out product and offers a unique form to function that I have not seen in any other competing product in this category. Whether you are a hobbyist or a professional musician looking for a simple, flexible, and highly portable recording solution that really works and won't break the bank, MiCreator Studio is definitely worth checking out.

MAP price for MiCreator Studio is $199. The optional MiCreator Satellite Microphone has the same specs as MiCreator Studio and is available for MAP price $99. An optional MiCreator y-Lav Lavalier microphone is available for MAP $99. MiCreator Studio comes with a voucher for Cubase LE or Wave ,which you can download for free once you register your MiCreator on the Austrian Audio website.

For more information, see austrian.audio

Neumann KH 150 Bi-amplified Studio Monitor

The Neumann KH 150 is a bi-amplified studio monitor built to deliver reference-grade performance that belies its compact size. The speaker is based around a 6.5-inch woofer that features a newly designed DSP engine. The Neumann KH 150 has both analog and standard SPDIF inputs and features a ported design based around Neumann's infinite baffle design, which is highly efficient in dispersing heat. Stereo imaging using the Neumann KH 150 is, as you may expect, excellent.

Built to super-tight tolerances and designed to outperform anything in its class, the Neumann KH150 studio monitor is an upgrade over the previously released Neumann KH-120 A, not only in size and design. The Neumann KH 150 delivers impressive specs and new features and enhancements far beyond a larger woofer. The Neumann KH 150 represents a new generation of Neumann monitors, which is fundamentally based around the loudspeaker's DSP. The result is extreme consistency, tight tolerances, more sophisticated limiting, and extremely low latency.

The Neumann KH 150 sits between the Neumann KH 120 II two-way speaker and the Neumann KH-310 three-way speaker. The Neumann KH 150 is built into a newly designed composite-based polycarbonate housing that is both lighter and stronger than the aluminum housing used in previous Neumann KH series speaker designs. Due to the KH 150's extremely tight design tolerances, each speaker is virtually a matched pair with any other Neumann KH 150 speaker.

The Neumann KH 150 is engineered to deliver highly flat linear accurate sonic responses across the entire audio spectrum, which makes it ideal for both nearfield and midfield applications in small-to-mid-sized studios. The KH 150's 6.5-inch woofer, the result of over three years of intensive research and development, has been integrated into a meticulously engineered 20-liter bass reflex cabinet, allowing the monitor to achieve impressively deep and tight bass response down to 39Hz and a maximum SPL of 118.7dB. Meanwhile, a specially designed 1-inch tweeter delivers crystal clear high range frequencies up to 21kHz. Powered, respectively, by 145 watts and 100 watts of energy-efficient Class D bi-amplification and assisted by Neumann's proprietary Mathematically Modeled Dispersion (MMD) waveguide, these deliver unerring sonic accuracy over a broad sweet spot, while minimizing desk reflections.

The Neumann KH 150 is a full-range loudspeaker capable of reproducing tight low end bass response. That said, depending on your source content, you may or may not need a subwoofer to fully exploit the potential of the speaker. The back of the Neumann KH-150 has a full complement of acoustical controls to help you dial in frequency response and output level based on your specific room application. For multi-speaker or immersive audio configurations, Neumann offers the KH 750, a DSP driven, network controllable subwoofer.

For networking applications, Neumann offers the KH 750 AES67. The KH 750 DSP can only receive an audio signal via analog or AES3 (S/PDIF compatible). Audio-over-IP is not possible; the network port is only for control. For Audio-over-IP, you need the Neumann KH 750 AES67 variant.

The Neumann KH 150 is also available as an AES67 version for IP networkable connectivity. Neumann's available MA 1 software makes it easy to fine tune your monitor system in whatever configuration you have the KH 150's deployed. The Neumann KH 150 is designed to be fully networkable over a standard ethernet network using the software. This makes it practical to configure the multiple KH 150's for Dolby, immersive audio systems, etc. For alignment of surround or immersive setups via MA 1 you need Multichannel Extension for MA 1, which is now available. If the control switch on the back of the KH 150 switch is in the Network position, the loudspeaker responds to settings you have configured via the MA1 Automatic Monitor Alignment software. Note that if you remove the network cable, the current settings will stay active. This feature is useful if you want to temporarily use the loudspeaker in a location other than the studio you might currently be working in.

To save energy, the Neumann KH-150 will go into auto standby mode after a user configurable period. The Neumann Logo will glow red if the speakers are overloaded. Neumann offers a range of available accessories which are deigned to fit the thread on the back of the speakers, and which allows them to be placed in a raised position on your desktop or mounted on walls. The Neumann KH 150 is available in anthracite and white for both for the regular version and for the AES67 variant.

Bottom line, the Neumann KH 150 delivers a huge sound for its size, has amazing mid-range response, and can be effectively used as a near-field or mid-field monitor for both stereo and immersive audio applications. The KH 150, due to its relatively small size and weight, makes it a desirable choice for travelling engineers. The KH 150's extremely flat linear response and overall consistency also make them an excellent choice for mastering sessions.

The Neumann KH 150 is a thoroughly modern and professional studio monitor and is immensely capable, despite its relatively small size. A masterpiece of industrial design, the Neumann KH 150 is currently one of the best nearfield monitors you can buy. With the Neumann KH 150, you really can hear details in your music that you might otherwise be missing. If you are a professional mix or mastering engineer and are considering upgrading your monitor system, the Neumann KH 150 is well worth checking out.

The Neumann KH 150 is available now for $1,750 per speaker.

Find out more at neumann.com/en-en/products/monitors/kh-150

The Society of Composers & Lyricists Strikes Gold With Its Career Symposium

Back in August, *Music Connection* informed readers about a brand-new symposium being presented by the Society of Composers & Lyricists, a professional organization devoted to the art of creating music for visual media—film, television, video games and beyond. Although the org is highly experienced in putting together educational events, this symposium marks a new era for the association. We wanted to know how the shindig went down, so *MC* decided to attend and get the inside scoop.

The Society of Composers & Lyricists Career Symposium took place on Saturday, Sept. 30, at Vanderbilt University's Blair School of Music, located in the heart of Nashville. Attending were plenty of students, although people of all ages, backgrounds, and career stages took advantage. The gathering was also available to the general public, not just members of the SCL. Those present included pupils who haven't yet entered the industry, apprentices currently working under panel participants, and an owner of an online music school.

One attendee was Logan Bray, the ambitious singer-songwriter mentioned in our previous article. She took pleasure in meeting one of the event's organizers, Scott McKinlay, in the flesh, but he isn't the only connection she's been able to forge. "I've met a bunch of other students and post-grads here who are engineers, producers and composers," the bright-eyed artist reveals. She is intensely aware that there are many scenarios under which expanding her network could pay dividends in the future.

The day kicked off with opening remarks from Ashley Irwin, president of the SCL. Now that the crowd was properly welcomed, attendees had to choose which of the four presentations they most wanted to experience. This was then repeated three more times, each seminar running an hour and 15 minutes. Because of this, it was only possible to be physically present for a quarter of the 16 offerings on tap. Fortunately, each discussion was filmed so they could later be uploaded, giving members an opportunity to check out whatever they missed online.

One of the most eagerly anticipated discussions was the spot covering music for video games. On the panel were three luminaries in this exciting discipline. At the far left sat Steve Schnur, Worldwide Executive and President for Music at Electronic Arts. He's toiled on some of the most popular games on the planet, including *Battlefield*, *Dragon Age, Mass Effect* and the recent *Star Wars: Jedi Survivor*.

Next to Schnur was Pinar Toprak, the Emmy-nominated composer whose talents grace *Fortnite*. On her other side was Satoshi Noguchi. His resume includes interactive experiences such as the groundbreaking *Elden Ring*. Tom Salta moderated the chat. He, too, has a stunning CV, having created soundtracks for *Halo, Prince of Persia,* and *Deathloop*, just for starters. The open-ended discussion explored all angles of creating sound for this dynamic medium.

Present and ready to level up was Emily Cheng, known professionally as Gisula. The Taiwanese-American composer is a full-time engineer with an equal devotion to the sonic arts. Beyond releasing solo albums, she creates soundtracks for short films and interactive entertainment. Her most recent game, *The Spirit & the Mouse*, came out in 2022 on the Nintendo Switch and this year on PlayStation 4 and 5. Rubbing shoulders with rising stars like this is just one benefit that comes with attending an SCL symposium.

The second block featured a master class on the art of matching sound to film according to the legendary Mark Isham. His extensive cinema credits include *A River Runs Through It, Crash* and *Never Cry Wolf*, plus many more. The time was devoted to examining his score for *The Black Dahlia*, a 2006 film starring Josh Hartnett and Scarlett Johansson. Chunks of the soundtrack were played, as were scenes from the film, after which people had the opportunity to ask questions. In response, Isham enlightened knowledge-seekers with tidbits about collaborating with cantankerous director Brian De Palma. Interestingly, the composer revealed that Robert Redford is his favorite filmmaker to work under, due to his actor's perspective.

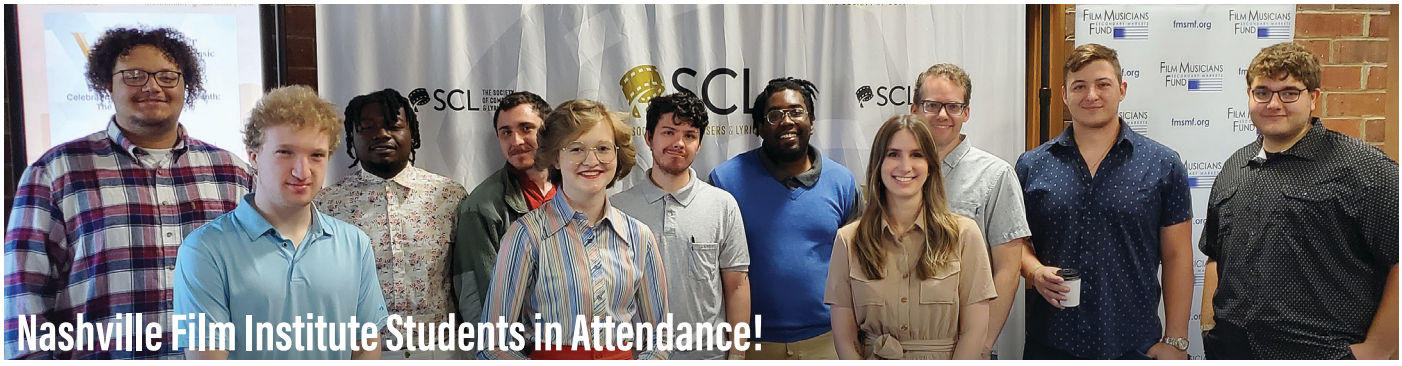
After a boxed lunch, the afternoon offered heaps more information. One seminar analyzed the challenge of creating sound on a budget. Composer Jay Weigel, who also happens to be the chair of the SCL's Nashville steering committee, hosted this revealing session. Audience members were keyed into important topics, such as how to decide when to take a job and at what price.

In the final block, those interested in using social media as a means of self-promotion gained insight into this vital subject. One of the panelists, Emily Goglia, delivered a handful of pointed tips. The singer, actress and social media professional proposed following people on various platforms in hopes that it will cause them to notice you. This simple action alone could forge an industry hookup that significantly advances someone's career.

The symposium was loaded with other opportunities for enlightenment about the industry's inner workings. Sessions plumbed the delicate task of eliciting the perfect vocal performance, songwriting for sync, assembling a business team, and tending to one's mental health while earning a living in this stressful field. Between seminars, everyone had the chance to rub shoulders with the panelists and pepper them with follow-ups.

Judging by the day's success, it is a near certainty that the SCL will continue to offer additional learning opportunities of this nature in the coming years. Anyone who wants to create sound for visual media should consider checking out future iterations.

Contact Jay Weigel, nashvillechair@thescl.comthescl.com



Nashville Film Institute Students in Attendance!

Composers and film music professionals from across the country came to Nashville to be panelists and to join SCL member and composer Dayna Bee (Front, R) and SCL member and composer Glenn Argall (back row, 3rd from L) on Sept 30 at Vanderbilt University. Pictured here is a group of Nashville Film Institute students—who joined Vanderbilt University students and students from other local universities—to attend a day-long event on breaking into the entertainment field...all as part of the 1st annual SCL SYMPOSIUM, in partnership with the Nashville Film Festival. For more info: thescl.com and nfi.edu

Show, Don't Tell

Excerpted from PARTY LIKE A ROCKSTAR: The Crazy, Coincidental, Hard-Luck, and Harmonious Life of a Songwriter ©2022 J.T. Harding and reprinted by permission from Twelve/Hachette Book Group.

Here are some tips to make your songs stand out: Whether it's words rolling off your tongue as you play your guitar, being typed by your thumbs in your phone, or scribbled in a notebook, your lyrics are expressing yourself but also expressing the feelings of the listeners. Not everyone knows how to say what they feel, and even if they do, a lot of people don't have the courage to say it. When a person can't explain how they feel, they'll find a song that can.

No one's as tongue-tied as I am when a beautiful girl is standing in front of me. The hardest thing for me to say to a person is that I'm falling for them. Equally difficult is when someone hurts my feelings. That's why I'm a songwriter. I write when I feel alone, I listen to music when I feel alone—so always remember, your listener may feel alone too. Write for them. They need songs about heartbreak as much as they need songs about joy and romance. They need you to put into a song how they feel, because it's hard for a lot of people to put matters of the heart into words.

To me, one of the cleverest things to do with lyrics is to say something simple that people can instantly relate to but that no one has said in a song before. It's similar to hearing a comedian tell a joke, and you think, "That's me!" It's not easy, but dig deep and you can wow the world. The lyric in that Alison Krauss song "When You Say Nothing at All," written by Keith Whitley, says, "Old Mr. Webster could never define what's being said between your heart and mine." How many times have you looked at a dictionary or heard the term Webster's Dictionary but never once thought to put it in a lyric? It's so simple and yet so universally understood.

In the song "Bette Davis Eyes," Kim Carnes sings, "Her hair is Harlow gold." Jean Harlow, the original Blonde Bombshell, started the trend for bleaching hair in the 1930s. Ask a hundred people to name a hair color, no one will say "Harlow gold." That's why it's such a stellar lyric! It also reinforces the song's title, singing about another feature of a person with "Bette Davis Eyes." In "A Woman Like You" recorded by Lee Brice, writer Phil Barton came up with "I probably never would have heard of yoga"—so straightforward but so smart in describing living with a girl.

"Show, Don't Tell" is the motto in Nashville. Show how you're feeling with imagery. In "Sangria" we say "wrecking ball dancing down the hallway." Our description is so much better than simply saying "we were tipsy." Use lyrics like Michelangelo used a paintbrush to paint the Sistine Chapel.

In "Heartbreakers," a song I co-wrote on the latest Kenny Chesney album, the lyric is "Jenny had the devil in her smile and a cross on her neck, first girl I ever saw smoke a cigarette." Once again, the imagery is so much better than a simple "Jenny was a girl I liked." In "Sweet Child o' Mine" Axl Rose recounts his childhood: "Her hair reminds me of a warm safe place where as a child I'd hide"...he's imagining a wheat field or bushes to describe his lover's hair, and it's really brilliant. Show, don't tell.

When thinking of a song title, imagine seeing it on a T-shirt. Ask yourself: Would this make a good T-shirt to sell at concerts? you make me smile is a great T-shirt; your lips taste like sangria is a great T-shirt. Blake Shelton sells wineglasses and decanters with that printed on them now. The song I wrote with Darius Rucker says, "The only BS I need is beers and sunshine." I can picture that as a bumper sticker and a T-shirt!

On the come-up in L.A. I was playing a lot of shows, and I learned that people looked up from their dollar beers and people they were flirting with when a song I sang had a cool lyric in the beginning. It's something I now try to do in every song, and you should too. Try to grab the listener's ears like a single girl grabbing a flying bouquet at a wedding. Get a lyric in the first line or two that makes people stop and turn up the radio. Make people look at their friends and say, "Whoa, did you hear that?" In "Different for Girls" I wrote "She don't text her friends and say 'I gotta get laid tonight'" in the first few lines. It caught people's attention. Country radio even bleeped it out on some stations. Double win!

In "Smile" Uncle Kracker sings "Cooler than the flip side of my pillow" two lines into the song. People mention that line to me all the time.

J.T. HARDING has written several chart-topping hits, including the three-million-selling "Smile" with Uncle Kracker, "Somewhere In My Car" with Keith Urban, "Somwhere With You" and "Bar at The End of the World" for Kenny Chesney, Dierks Bentley's "Different for Girl," Jake Owen's "Alone With You," and Blake Shelton's No. 1 song "Sangria." Check out @jtxrockstar

Brian Setzer

The Devil Always Collects

Surfdog Records

Producers: Brian Setzer and Julian Raymond

9

It's been over two years since his "Gotta Have the Rumble" release and over four years since he embarked on a tour. But after a break in the action Setzer's back with, arguably, one of his best. You can't deny his incendiary guitar work, smooth vocals and artful blend of rockabilly, swing and retro cool. And jazzy acrobatic numbers like "What'll it Be Baby Doll" and "Black Leather Jacket" are well crafted and seal the deal. **– *Eric Harabadian***

Meltt

Eternal Embers

Nettwerk

Producers: Meltt and Kieran Wagstaff

6

"Into the Blue," the lead track off Meltt's latest liquescent sound trip, was inspired by a documentary about Indonesian free divers. It's an intriguing subject that perfectly reflects the Canadian act's sonic style. Yet while the disc's introductory notes offer heady promise, the excitement doesn't last and slogging to the end grows increasingly wearisome. Lovers of ethereal art rockers such as Low Hum and Mild Orange are most likely to unearth joy from these billowy beats. **– *Andy Kaufmann***

The Brook and the Bluff

Bluebeard

The Brook and the Bluff/Awal

Producers: The Brook and the Bluff/Micah Tawlks

8

These indie/folk rockers harken slightly back to the heydays of dream-poppers Bon Iver and Fleet Foxes but with more hipster beats, fresh, edgy production that makes their fourth full-length an infectious gem. While offering clever wordplay, insights into love's travails and other quirky aspects of life, the band's good fortune as a prolific recording and touring unit is tied directly to the gently hypnotic, intimate lead vocals of frontman Joseph Settine, who brings an ethereal quality to every moment of lovelorn emotion. **– *Jonathan Widran***

Gunship

Unicorn

Independent

Producer: Gunship

7

Synth-wave juggernauts Gunship are back with an album featuring composers John Carpenter and Tyler Bates and musicians Gavin Rossdale and sax slinger Tom Cappello. While "Monster In Paradise" is a face melter, it leans a little too tongue-in-cheek—with Blade-esque b-sides and a literal "money grabbing sequel" to their previous show-stopper, "Tech Noir." ... But just like *T2* and *Aliens*, it's still pretty dope. Much like '86's Stallone classic *Cobra*, however, this album's best material is in its first 20 minutes. **– *Andy Mesecher***

LANY

a beautiful blur

Polydor Records/Interscope

Producer: LANY

8

When LANY released "Cowboy in L.A." on their third LP, *Mama's Boy*, it resounded like a fitting blend of Nashville Indie music meets dream pop. Two full-length albums later, the Indie-pop trio is back with a follow-up effort called *I Really Really Hope So*. The track "It Even Rains In L.A." kind of feels like a sequel to "Cowboy In L.A." or, better yet, a harsh reality check for a hopeless romantic where love and genuine friendships don't come as easy as they normally would in a small town far away from Los Angeles. **– *Miguel Costa***

Roger Eno

The Skies, They Shift Like Chords

Deutsche Grammophon

Producer: Christian Badzura

7

This album leaves no doubt that Roger Eno is cut from the same ethereal cloth as his brother, Brian Eno. Each sibling crafts crystalline soundscapes that explore the deepest recesses of our minds. "Strangely, I dreamt," stands out as the sole track with vocals, here performed by cowriter/daughter Cecily Eno and ending with unexpected abruptness. Nonetheless, there's plenty on tap here to soothe the soul, like a warm bath in audible form. **- *Andy Kaufmann***

Nick Grant

Sunday Dinner

Infinity/Epic

Producers: Various

8

Grant asks listeners to pull up a chair and feast on his *Sunday Dinner*. Though this release serves as an appetite for destruction, it will leave you hungry for more. The apple doesn't fall far from the tree, as Grant gives off an Outkast/Kendrick Lamar vibe. He dishes out food for thought with suitable production to complement. *Sunday Dinner* is a rich and hearty meal, with room for "seconds," giving listeners more to digest. It may even be able to make a couch potato grab a lemon and turn it into lemonade. **– *Adam Seyum***

CMAT

CrazyMad, For Me

Awal Distribution

Producer: Matias Téllez (except "Whatever's Inconvenient")

6

Feisty, expressive, and original, CMAT navigates between dramatic ballads and sassy anthems as she recounts a toxic love and ensuing trauma and gradual acceptance. Country, indie rock, and '80s / '90s pop elements form a unique blend with strong vocals and decoration woven above a rich instrumental sound. CMAT brings quirky, dark-humored storytelling to the realities of being human and the evolution of overcoming challenges, wrapped inside a gorgeous musical delivery that effortlessly bends the ear. **– *Andrea Beenham***

To be considered for review in the Album Reviews section, you must have a record deal with a major label or an independent label with an established distributor. If you do not, please see our New Music Critiques section.

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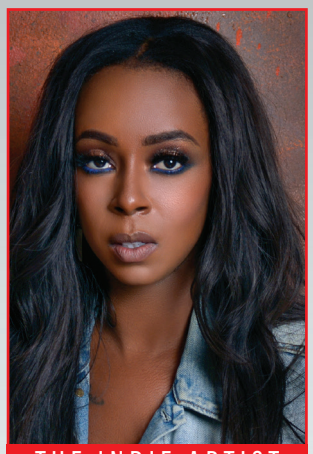

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- Kathleen Wirt,
Owner, 4th Street Recording

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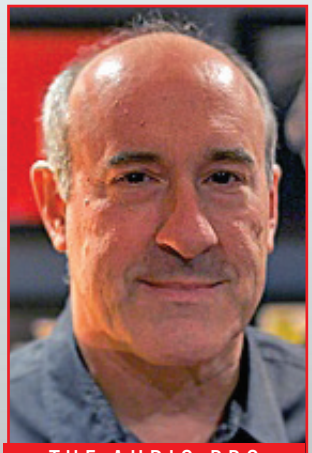
- Chris Sampson,
Vice Dean for Contemporary Music, USC Thornton School of Music



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- Paul Wolff, *Designer, Inventor, Owner, FIX Audio Designs*

MUSIC CONNECTION

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Barely Legal

Contact: beatrice@empktpr.com
Web: Spotify
Seeking: Booking, Film/TV, Distribution
Style: Rap, Hip-Hop

Tampa four-piece hip-hop "boy band" Barely Legal pick up where Brockhampton and N*E*R*D* left off, with an electric mix of hype, harmony and personalities. After hearing "Killing All the Fun," album opener on the *Barely Legal Tapes, Vol. 2*, a cool R&B track, filled with skits, synths, sound pads and smooth vocals, we wanted to hear more, which doesn't always happen. "Watch Ya Head" has big Pharrell energy, especially in the building refrain. Each rapper makes a stellar appearance, and then passes the mic. Demonstrating versatility, the mood changes on "Catapult," a downright bitter, depressing song about an ex, that offsets the heaviness and anger with jazz guitar and lounge vibraphones. Barely Legal are rising stars.

Production	9
Lyrics	8
Music	9
Vocals	9
Musicianship	9

SCORE: 8.8

Supergloom

Contact: supegloomband@gmail.com
Web: supergl00m.com/media/music
Seeking: Mgmt, Booking, Label, Film/TV
Style: Alt-Rock

Deploying a group vocal style and layers of fuzz, Supergloom have a dynamic sonic style that is consisent and, at times, challenging. The cleverly titled "Glass Ajar," with its power shifts from dreamy to overdrive, is one complex composition that might lose some listeners while dazzling others. "Silhouette" has layers of fuzz and falsetto group vocals that are dreamy and soothing, joined by a cool, keening, guitar solo. "Stairdown" is powered by a thumping bass drum and, of course, the band's signature wall of mega-fuzz. Listeners will notice vocal moments reminiscent of Sufjan Stevens, Animal Collective, and Tame Impala. There's lots to like here if you're a music fan looking beyond the usual fare.

Production	9
Lyrics	8
Music	8
Vocals	8
Musicianship	8

SCORE: 8.2

Hazelrigg Brothers

Contact: etlarsen@comcast.com
Web: outermarkerrecords.com
Seeking: Film/TV Placement
Style: Jazz, Rock

From the performances to the production, this is a sophisticated piece of work by these two brothers, a jazz reimagining of *Synchronicity*, the 1983 album by The Police. "Synchronicity I" showcases the high level of musicianship that the duo bring to these songs. The hit song "Every Breath You Take" is delivered here with a quicker tempo than the original, a bowed cello, and an upright bass playing the vocal line. (The recording's technical looping piano melody is almost a pedagogy exercise.) Finally, "Walking In Your Footsteps" features a funky bassline, piano solos, and minimal percussion (cajon?, shaker?) for a great jam. All in all, it's fun to hear songs as familiar as these re-interpreted so creatively.

Production	9
Lyrics	X
Music	8
Vocals	X
Musicianship	9

SCORE: 8.6

Alyssa & Wayne

Contact: lcollins@milestonepublicity.com
Web: awbrewer.com
Seeking: Booking
Style: Country

Husband and wife duo Alyssa & Wayne have recorded a faithful tribute to songs made famous by the legendary couple, Tammy Wynette & George Jones, and they truly nail it. Alyssa & Wayne's vocal harmonies are especially sweet and effective, and very well recorded. This is classic, authentic, subtly twangy country music. Alyssa's solo singing really shines on "Golden Ring." Strong vocal harmonies carry the upbeat, classy country bop of "We're Gonna Hold On" through its interesting key changes. We like the pedal steel guitar on the melancholy, mid-tempo march "Someone I Used to Know" and we feel the sadness and longing the song conveys. All in all, this collection is a respectful project that will help keep the legends alive.

Production	9
Lyrics	8
Music	8
Vocals	9
Musicianship	9

SCORE: 8.6

Marcia Hadjimarkos

Contact: etlarsen@comcast.net
Web: outermarkerrecords.com
Seeking: Film/TV Placement
Style: Classical

Adept pianist Marcia Hadjimarkos has recorded a series of brief minimalist classical pieces that includes two by that catchy and quirky genius Erik Satie: "Danse de Travers" and "Gnossienne." The pianist delivers faithful, straightforward renditions of both pieces, as opposed to re-interpretations, as some musicians have done in the past. The latter piece she infuses with effective pauses and hesitations, but nothing showy or distracting. Her stellar, flawless, all-business style shows respect for the composer. Same goes for the pensive, spare, and spacey "Fur Alina" (by Arvo Part), full of disjunct chords, in which Hadjimarkos delivers another accurate performance, captured live-in-studio with crisp and clear production.

Production	9
Lyrics	X
Music	8
Vocals	X
Musicianship	8

SCORE: 8.3

Elle Belle

Contact: caroline@clarioncallmedia.com
Web: ellebellemusic.com
Seeking: Booking
Style: Pop-Rock

Christopher Pappas is Elle Belle and he has the ideal vocal tone to make his songs of psychic distress (recorded during a trying time in his recent life) connect with the listener, despite elusive lyrics that can sometimes seem bewildering. That's true of "Hey Dreamers," a simple, quiet, downtempo song. And while it's difficult to decipher its words, the band and female backup vocals are ear-pleasing. Pappas' vocals shine on the brisk, mid-tempo "Gone Are The Days" with its Casio/Korg keyboard tones. We like the heavy, funky bass of "Freaks and Sugar," but are not in love with the "Freaks and sugar, honey yeah!" chorus hook. We also urge the artist to add more echo to his unadorned voice on this track.

Production	8
Lyrics	7
Music	8
Vocals	9
Musicianship	7

SCORE: 7.8

Music Connection's executive committee rates recorded music on a scale of 1 to 10. Number 1 represents the lowest possible score, 10 represents the highest possible score.
A final score of 7 denotes a solid, competent artist. For more information, see Submission Guidelines on the next page.

Babilonia

Contact: celia@celiachavez.com
Web: babiloniasongs.com
Seeking: Film/TV, Mgmt, Booking
Style: Indie Singer-Songwriter

We're immediately struck by the quality of Celia Chavez's voice. It's little wonder: she has toured as a back-up for a wide range of top performers. On her own skillfully produced solo recordings (AC acoustic rock material, tight supportive band) her rich, resonant tones convey her introspective lyrics perfectly. The downcast "No Companion" and "Merciless" deal with life's struggles that bring "sleepless nights." The gently and jazzy "Anniversary" brightens the air with optimistic lyrics about resisting life's difficulties and appreciating "how far I've come." Ultimately, as impressed as we are with her voice, we get the feeling that Chavez has plenty left in reserve. Maybe she can use that power on songs with stronger hooks.

Production	8
Lyrics	7
Music	7
Vocals	9
Musicianship	8

SCORE: 7.8

Disaster Artist

Contact: etlarsen@comcast.net
Web: outermarkerrecords.com
Seeking: Film/TV Placement
Style: Art/Punk

Valuing punk rock authenticity, Disaster Artist consistently achieves a raw, live sound on their recordings. Right out of the gate, on the speedy, frantic "Weaponize," the band's vocalist makes an immediate impact with a whole variety of gutteral grunts and vomits. The drummer is relentless and keeps it all from collapse. "White T-Shirt" is just as speedy, and its guitar tones and textures (along with a heavy fuzz bass) make a strong impression. Unexpectedly, the band has an instrumental in its arsenal, "Twin-headed Dragon," that spotlights each of the band's members for what amounts to a solo showdown that's something of a punk-fueled jam. Clearly, the band set out to avoid any hint of slickness and that aim is achieved.

Production	7
Lyrics	7
Music	7
Vocals	8
Musicianship	8

SCORE: 7.4

Mom Rock

Contact: jbonner@milestonepublicity.com
Web: momrockofficial.com
Seeking: Label, Management
Style: Rock

Salvos of power pop-rock are generated by this band whose catchy and uber-melodic attack is consistent and pleasing, with vocals that are consistently crisp and clear. There's the fun, light, dancey "My Way," with its fast, upbeat, breathily chanted chorus. "It's a Real Tough Life" is a breezy tune with some ska in its chemistry. And its chorus is powered by a wonderful gang chant while the band delivers a dose of straightahead rock with a heavy bassline that's peppered with numerous high-energy shouts. All in all, we'd say that fans of the Hives, the Strokes, and the White Stripes will warm to Mom Rock's music. One thing is certain: this is an especially tight, precise band that knows what it is about.

Production	8
Lyrics	7
Music	7
Vocals	8
Musicianship	8

SCORE: 7.6

Hotboi Ty

Contact: powerseatmusicgroup@gmail.com
Web: Spotifty
Seeking: Booking, Film/TV, Distribution
Style: Hip-Hop

A commanding vocalist and an extremely competent rapper, Hotboi Ty is no stranger to our *NMC*, and is back in our stereos with a new album *From the Heart*. On the dynamic single "Time," Ty leads the track with heavy reverb and auto-tune—the production is marvelous and structures different movements and themes effectively. "Cold Feet" highlights Ty's fast flow, breaking for a melodic, Miguel-smooth sung chorus, just for a moment before returning to his rapid attack. "Rain cloud, go away. Stay down, had to get some cake," is the chorus of "Rain Clouds." While the subject is a tired "get money" message, put simply, Hotboi Ty does it well. We are always impressed with this rapper, who is holding his own and keeps leveling up.

Production	9
Lyrics	8
Music	8
Vocals	9
Musicianship	8

SCORE: 8.4

Thetan

Contact: dan@blackmattermastering.com
Web: thetan.bandcamp.com
Seeking: Film/TV
Style: Punk

Punk/metal "powerviolence" duo Thetan deliver incredibly brief songs with a blistering aggression that seems from another dimension. The band's frantic all-in performance of "Laugh Track of Your Life," for example, is over and done in 30 seconds flat. The guys take 50 seconds to deliver "Into the Briarpatch," a song that offers enough room for Thetan to downshift from searingly speedy to a doomy, smoldering metal pit. The riff-driven "Pride Swallowed" clocks in at 1:15, taking its time to deliver a tight, unrelenting plate of squeals and riff blisters. Music supervisors for film, TV or game projects might make good use of Thetan's themes to sonically illustrate a tormented character's nervous breakdown.

Production	8
Lyrics	7
Music	7
Vocals	8
Musicianship	7

SCORE: 7.4

Vine Sweetland

Contact: vinesweetland@gmail.com
Web: Spotify
Seeking: Film/TV
Style: World

The tabla, the sitar, the flute—we westerners have all heard this exotic style of music that hails from half-way around the globe, but rarely have we heard it with the level of intensity that poet-musician Vine Sweetland and friends bring to these instrumentals. To the untrained ear, "Raga Bhanga" might seem chaotic and even shrill at times. But you have to appreciate the passion these musicians bring to their playing. Some of us preferred "Caravan" with its stark, windy, atmospheric, desolate intro, that's soon lightened by a gentle violin, before it all bursts forth in a loud, almost freeform spree. Others in our group prefer "Raga Omega" for its hypnotic, dramatic musicianship and its solid structure.

Production	9
Lyrics	x
Music	8
Vocals	x
Musicianship	8

SCORE: 8.3

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES: There is absolutely no charge for a New Music Critique. We critique recordings that have yet to connect with a label or distributor. To be considered please go to musicconnection.com/get-reviewed. All submissions are randomly selected and reviewed by committee.

ARTHUR VEROCAI

SHERRY YOUNGE

The Mayan *Los Angeles, CA*

Contact: Leah Concialdi, leah@dlmediamusic.com
Players: Arthur Verocai, conducting, vocals; Samantha Schmütz, vocals; Rogê, vocals; Scott Mayo, flute, piccolo, soprano sax; Philip Whack, alto sax; David Urqidi, Baritone sax; Kristian Foreman, trombone; 30-piece orchestra

Material: Following collaborations with Australian band Hiatus Kaiyote (2021's *Mood Valiant*), arrangements for Canada's BadBadNotGood, and arranging Tyler the Creator's score to honor Virgil Abloh (post-humously) at 2020's Paris Fashion, legendary Brazilian folk-jazz arranger Arthur Verocai kicked off night one of his first American tour in front of a packed, energetic—and very diverse—crowd in Los Angeles. With a nod to his 1972 debut, playing "Velho Parente," the performance also included songs from 2016's *No Voo do Urubu*, with the majority of the 65-minute set focused on songs from 2022's *Timeless*.

Musicianship: With beautifully written and arranged scores, the orchestra played incredibly well. The band consisted of 30 diverse musicians from across Los Angeles. Between brass and rhythm section breakouts, sax solis, and beautiful string flourishes set against pulsating rhythmic melodies, Verocai's music is romantic and dreamy, with songs transitioning between jazz, funk, and traditional Brazilian and orchestral feels. Fabulous solos from woodwind musicians including Scott Mayo (flute, piccolo, soprano saxophone), Philip Whack (alto saxophone), and David Urqidi (baritone saxophone), and Kristian Foreman on the trombone added to the lovely instrumentals.

Performance: Following a quick video introduction on the history of Bossa Nova sound, the passionate crowd cheered and clapped enthusiastically between songs and after each of the solos. An alternating twinkle-lighted floor added to the ambiance of the room and magnified the delivery of Verocai's mood-making pieces. In full form all evening, taking in every moment of his newfound cult popularity, Verocai continues to challenge musical convention with his genre-bending musical compositions that pull from Bossa Nova, samba, jazz, funk, and more.

Summary: Leaning into traditional Brazilian string, guitar, piano, bass, and percussive sound, Verocai's music is both soothing and progressive. With his original (1972) album now having been sampled by rappers MF Doom, Ludacris, Little Brother, and others, the evening's audience clearly reflected the shift in fanbase. With a palpable combination of energy and sound, Arthur Verocai's show is simultaneously ethereal, anthemic, and theatrical, as he presents music for music's sake. **– *Andrea Beenham***

MAGGIE CUBILLOS

PIERCE BROCHETTI

The Hotel Café *Hollywood, CA*

Web: linktr.ee/maggiecubillos
Contact: mike@earshotmedia,com
Players: Maggie Cubillos, vocals, keyboards

Material: Maggie Cubillos is a soft rock, Americana, pop artist who sounds a lot like Sara Bareilles with a tinge of Alanis Morissette. Although inspired by the likes of Adele, Phoebe Bridgers and Gracie Abrams, Cubillos' music resonates as her very own. The songs are beautifully poetic with deep meanings entrenched within the lyrics as she tells stories of her own life-lessons. Although the music is soft and soothing, most of the lyrics are dark and moving.

Musicianship: The musicianship is very good. Cubillos is adept at writing deep and profound lyrics that penetrate the soul and leave you feeling bare. She writes about her own experiences and the damages life inflicts upon us all. "Fear of Abandonment," is a song about being needy and clingy but she tries to explain her state of mind in the song. "All I wanted was for you to meet me halfway" rings true and hits home in almost everyone's life.

Performance: Maggie Cubillos has good stage presence and she has a bubbly personality that reverberates happiness and joy. A complete reversal to her personality are the lyrics to most all of her songs. They are heartfelt lyrics, but dwell on the darker side of the spectrum. The live performance is almost a second version of each song. The production in the studio version of her songs is outstanding, and they have a little more "umph" because of all the other instruments; while the live show is a bit sullen and more serious, with just keyboard and vocals.

Summary: Strongly inspired by Adele, Cuban/Columbian Maggie Cubillos, hailing from Hermosa Beach, reaches for the stars on this stint at The Hotel Café. The house was packed with family and friends, which brought smiles to the Los Angeles born singer-songwriter. She reminisced about how the songs came about and the inspiration that brought about each song, as well as pitching her downloads. Her videos feature a whole band as her first single released in 2022, "Old Shoes," produced by Steve Ornest (who also played guitar on the track), was a smashing hit. **– *Pierce Brochetti***

Bandcamp *Nashville, TN*

Web: gentryblue.com
Contact: gentrybluenashville@gmail.com
Players: Lydia Gentry-DeBonis, vocals, violin; Brendan Gentry-DeBonis, guitar; Sean Jannay, bass; Clay Skiles, drums

Material: Gentry Blue is evidently named after singer Lydia Gentry-DeBonis, but husband-guitarist Brendan Gentry-Debonis probably feels equal ownership over the title. One might assume blues is their focus, but the Belmont University-formed group's sound remains more psychedelic rock than Southern roadhouse. Playing in a space dubbed The Practice Room, the quartet performed cuts off their EP and forthcoming full-length. "Collide" is about the terrifying notion of universes crashing, while "Tell Me I'm Insane" relates the tale of a female killer. Covers included takes on Franz Ferdinand and Tool. A version of Rush's "Working Man" finished the set.

Musicianship: Technical difficulties dampen the shine of any artist; a persistent buzz proved a constant annoyance. Nonetheless, ample zeal makes up for this, and the occasional guitar lick touched the heavens. Lydia Gentry-DeBonis possesses delectable vocal tone, though she's more comfortable with certain songs over others. Her electric violin adds more than a spark of color. Meanwhile, Jannay's scrumptious bass lines sometimes feel out of pocket. Drummer Skiles sat in with the band for the first time and did an admirable job working with unfamiliar material. Perhaps it was inevitable that his inexperience would weigh them down.

Performance: Gentry Blue is a fun collection of players, and the uniting of individuals with disparate influences makes for an intriguing sound. A joie de vivre for creating noise elevates their grade, but a focus on stagecraft would take them further. Reassessing wardrobe choices, for instance, would definitely yield dividends. Leaving random items within camera range remains a minor blunder, but making up for this is their ever-present, blue flame logo, a professional and classy touch.

Summary: Some acts are pure of spirit, and this is one of them. Gentry Blue's members cannot be faulted for their realness and belief in the power of music. Still, they must polish their presentational elements to truly be spotlight-ready. Further, they must strive to unearth the sonic glue that fuses their unique strands into a cohesive statement. – ***Andy Kaufmann***

The Hotel Café *Hollywood, CA*

Web: hannahconnolly.com
Contact: mgmt@hannahconnolly.com
Players: Hannah Connolly, vocals, guitar; Jordan Ruiz, pedal steel guitar, guitar, vocals; Ben Greenburg, guitar, vocals; Dave Pelusi, bass; John Fatum, drums

Material: Hannah Connolly is an Americana singer-songwriter whose music gives off a country vibe mixed with blues and rock & roll. The music is very melodic and the lyrics are extremely heartfelt. The songs are exceptionally crafted and just hit the focal point of your soul as they are performed live. Beautiful melodies and soulful voicings touch the inner core of your being and make you want to shout out with appreciation for life.

Musicianship: Ruiz and Greenburg are both exceptional players and each add a different layer of fluidity to each song. Fatum and Pelusi are the driving force that keeps everything together and lets Connolly do magic with her voice. Fatum is a dynamic drummer who brings everything to life. Brilliant vocals keep everything intact; from the low lows to the falsetto highs, you can feel the beauty emanating from the music.

Performance: From the opening tune, "From Where You Are," to the closer, "Golden," all were great. "From Where You Are" has a hook line that didn't let go all night and the crowd begged for more. Even the sad "Bags Are Packed" had a beautiful connotation that, no matter what happens, everything will be alright. Lovely song after lovely song, each as unique as the next, was presented to the audience and each one accepted as beautiful.

Summary: Hannah Connolly is a joy to watch and not to be missed. Her show's atmosphere is light and airy and fun. Tunes like "Second Place," "Reno," and "Stay Home," which is about not having to go out if you don't feel like it, hits home and makes you think, "She's right." Add to that some lovely music by some great musicians and you have a hit band! All the songs are great and the band performs them with boundless enthusiasm.

– Pierce Brochetti

The Crocodile *Seattle, WA.*

Contact: ever@tinyhumanpr.com
Web: kingyoungblood.com/
Players: Cameron Miles Lavi-Jones, vocals, guitar; Samy Garcia, bass; Chet Peterson, cello; Paul "Sticks" Stoot, drums.
Material: Seattle-based King Youngblood is a hard-edged rock band that blends fierce guitar riffs and in-your-face vocals (Living Colour, "Cult of Personality") with robust melodic choruses (System of a Down, "Aerials"). Their set at the Black & Loud Fest featuring black-led bands, co-founded by King Youngblood's Lavi-Jones and Down North's Anthony Briscoe, showcased Youngblood's skill in bringing music-based activism to Seattle. The band's lyrics serve as a platform to examine socially conscious topics—violence and discrimination toward marginalized communities—but also explore more prosaic themes, navigating personal growth in an ever-evolving world.

Musicianship: King Youngblood's musical technique is impressive. Lead singer and guitarist Lavi-Jones pushed his vocals from guttural grit to alt-crooning in "Big Thank," while his emotive guitar sounds embodied early John Frusciante tonalities. Drummer Paul Stoot's complex fills and bassist Samy Garcia's sleek harmonics meshed well together and added creative character to the rhythm section. Amped-up cellist Chet Peterson's brilliant melodic and harmonic string accompaniment paired well with Lavi-Jones' guitars alongside Stoot and Garcia's thrumming beats and basslines. Together, the four performed an energetically synchronized set.

Performance: King Youngblood opened their show at The Crocodile with a statement of gratitude, thanking the audience for supporting the Black & Loud Fest before pounding into the punk-leaning "Yakubian Antics." The intensity remained high for "THREAD," the crowd pushing against the stage absorbing the energy resonating through the venue. Youngblood continued their set with the poignant "too late, too soon" and anthemic "Big Thank." The band completed their set with the alt-rock-driven eponymic "King Youngblood" and "Heavy Handed." Not done, the foursome added a surprise finale when Lavi-Jones brought the musicians participating in the event on stage for a freestyle rock-out. The evening culminated with the crowd diving into an impromptu mosh pit, an ending the audience won't forget.

Summary: King Youngblood are skillful, socially conscious musicians with a ruthless stage presence. The band's energetic alt-rock live shows and savvy DIY multi-media marketing have helped them build a strong following in Seattle. If stars align, they're primed to break through nationwide. Look for King Youngblood playing shows throughout the Pacific Northwest and new music soon! – ***Megan Perry***

The Mint *Los Angeles, CA*

Web: rachaelsage.com
Contact: jillr@mpressrecords.com
Players: Rachael Sage, guitar, vocals, piano; Ward Williams, cello

Material: Hailing from Port Chester, NY, Rachael Sage is a singer-songwriter whose delicate poetry encompasses most of her songs. The lyrics are deeply felt and come straight from the heart as the songs focus mainly on the lyrics. Piano and guitar are the main catalyst for the lyrics, but to everyone's surprise, the unsung hero here was Williams on the cello, as he carried each tune to newer and higher places.

Musicianship: Sage is a good piano player as well as a good guitar player and singer. Her music is not fancy or extravagant, but it hits home with the lyrics. Williams, on the other hand, took mediocre writings and just raised the level of each tune, musically, to new heights. The background vocals, as well as the cello play, was exceptional; modest but brilliant, and it blew everyone away.

Performance: Sage is very chatty and made an effort to connect to the audience in every way possible. She is entertaining and direct and loves engaging her audience as she pranced around the stage. It was like being at a friend's house, enjoying a night of acoustic music.

Summary: Rachael Sage's music is simple and straightforward. Tunes like "No Regret," an upbeat, happy song about her father (who had cancer) and herself, who is a uterine cancer survivor, as they connected on an emotional level through an ordeal that only leaves devastation in its wake. Add a beautiful cello and superb background vocals and you have a hit song. Or the catchy, "I Done a Rebecca." It's a tune that'll rock your socks off while you're trying to picture (hear) a full band playing it. Check out her latest effort, *The Other Side*, out now at all your local platforms. – ***Pierce Brochetti***

First Congregational Church *Los Angeles ,CA*

Web: pamyua.com
Contact: ngpr1231@gmail.com
Players: Phillip Blanchett, vocals; Stephen Blanchett, vocals; Ossie Kairaiuak, vocals; Karina Moeller, vocals; Kristopher Reenberg, keys, bass; Sara Anderholm, keys; Eiden Pofpifil, drums; Marie Meade, dance

Material: Indigenous, Native Alaskans is what Pamyua call themselves. All of them are part of Native American Indian tribes of their forefathers and gladly vocalize their message using their voices. Traditional Native American chants are mixed in with the traditional tom-toms to recreate the very familiar Indian sounds and beats we all grew up with and love. Mix that with modern R&B, rap and pop and you have a unique sound.

Musicianship: The backing band is excellent in their play. They keep things tight for the vocalists as they chant, groove and rap for the audience. The drums, a major part of the Indian culture, is headed by Pofpifil, behind a kit. He leads the way for the others, who have shaman, handheld drums, and together at this show they thumped the hell out that church. Reenberg held down double duty (bass and keys), and Anderholm tickled her keys with effortless grace. Together they formed a great team.

Performance: The backdrop to this performance was a beautiful church with fabulous architecture that was 50 feet high and encapsulated some of the most beautiful carvings, models and statues you have ever seen. Throw on top of that some fine vocals and you have a great evening of music. Each singer was clearly heard and each was at the top of their game as they crooned and serenaded the audience to their feet to dance. Everyone had a great time hearing stories of the singers' past and how they came to be a group.

Summary: Pamyua is popularizing their ancestral sounds and mixing them with modern-day, R&B, rap and pop and attracting a younger generation because of it. Their sound is very modern while it still holds the older, traditional Native American Indian vibe. They are quite modern in their sound, with great harmonies coming from all vocalists. The chants are unintelligible and difficult to relate to, but Pamyua connected with the audience, regardless, and made them understand. Good performance, overall. The only thing missing was the headdress. ***– Pierce Brochetti***

The Hotel Café *Hollywood, CA*

Web: maureentoth.com
Contact: info@maureentoth.com
Players: Maureen Toth, vocals, guitar; Carlos Calvo, guitar, vocals; Dave Sutton, bass, Marc Slutsky, drums

Material: Maureen Toth is a singer-songwriter whose music is upbeat, but dark at the same time. The tunes have a sadness about them that seem to reach for the soul, regardless of the theme of the song. Toth writes about everything in life, including an owl that she became attached to, disappeared and is now entrenched in a song ("Owl") to be remembered forever. Country-ish at times, bluesy at others, Toth seems to bring out the beauty in any subject, no matter how simple it is.

Musicianship: Toth has an outstanding group of musicians backing her up and they came ready to play. Calvo was exceptional on guitar as he poured out his heart on every tune. "Con Te" was beautifully performed by Calvo, showcasing some lovely classical, as well as Spanish flavors throughout the song. He made it come alive and put the song over the top with an excellent solo.

Performance: Led by Toth and her excellent vocals, Sutton and Slutsky, the rhythm section, could do no wrong. While Sutton shined on "Liars," the bass line became the main focus of the song (only to be upended by a Pink Floyd intro, "Another Brick in the Wall"). Slutsky, on the other hand, was a time machine; on time, every time, on every song; no small feat.

Summary: Maureen Toth is an Americana singer-songwriter hailing from Huntington Station, NY. She collaborated with Bernie Lawson (Lucinda Williams, Melissa Etheridge, Rickie Lee Jones, Jackson Brown and many others) early in her career and has continued to thrive since. Check out her new EP, *Chiaroscuro*, which was released in June and streamed on all platforms. Well-crafted songs that are beautifully sung and performed by a group of musicians making beautiful music.

– Pierce Brochetti

MUSIC CONNECTION

Directory of Music Publishers

The major and indie publishers in this MC directory promote, exploit and collect payments for their writers' music. All info is updated for 2023, supplied by the listees. Please respect those who do not accept unsolicited material.

3 RING CIRCUS MUSIC
2209 Grantland Ave
Nashville, TN 37204
Email: admin@3ringcircusmusic.com
Web: 3ringcircusmusic.com

ABET MUSIC
411 E. Huntington Dr., Ste. 107
Arcadia, CA 91006
626-303-4114
Email: info@abetpublishing.com
Web: abetmusic.com
Styles: easy listening, chill, rock, world music, alternative
How to Submit: submit via website

ALFRED PUBLISHING
P.O. Box 10003
Van Nuys, CA 91410-0003
800-292-6122, 818-628-1528
Web: alfred.com
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

ANOTHER VICTORY, INC.
CONCORD MUSIC
5750 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 450
Los Angeles, CA 90036
310-385-4455
Email: info@victoryrecords.com
Web: concord.com/labels/victory-records, facebook.com/VictoryRecords
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

Additional locations:

10 Lea Ave., #300
Nashville, TN 37210
629-401-3901

250 W 57th St.
6th Floor
New York, NY 10107
212-699-6588

7300 Biscayne Boulevard
1st Floor
Miami, FL 33138
305-760-6690

ANTHEM ENTERTAINMENT
120 Bremner Blvd, #2900
Toronto, ON, Canada M5J 08A
416-850-1163
Web: anthementertainment.com/music-publishing

Additional locations:

Nashville
462 Humphreys Street
Nashville, TN 37203
1-615-327-2605

Los Angeles
9000 W. Sunset Blvd., Ste. 806
West Hollywood, CA 90069-5808
1-310-859-7450 Fax 1-310-288-2133

A WRITER'S PARADISE
Nashville, TN
615-852-8297
Email: stacy@awritersparadise.com
Web: awritersparadise.com
Contact: Stacy Hogan
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

BIG DEAL MUSIC GROUP
Big Deal Media
15503 Ventura Blvd., Ste. #300
Encino, CA 91436
818-922-0807
Email: info@bigdealmusic.com
Web: bigdealmusic.com
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

BIG FISH MUSIC (BMI)
CALIFORNIA SUN MUSIC (ASCAP)
12720 Burbank Blvd., Unit 124
Valley Village, CA 91607-1421
818-508-9777
Email: clisag21@yahoo.com
Web: facebook.com/bigfishmusicbuilding
Contact: Chuck Tennin, Lora Sprague
All Styles: physical therapy music, country, pop, ballads, up-tempo, adult contemporary, gospel, Film/TV, orchestral, classical, instrumentals, rock, new age, jazz, blues, alternative
Notes: Visit nimbitmusic.com/bigfishmusic to check out the kind of music you are looking for.

BLUEWATER MUSIC SERVICES CORP.
705 2nd Ave., S.
Nashville, TN 372120
615-327-0808
Email: info@bluewatermusic.com
Web: bluewatermusic.com
Published: see web
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

BOOSEY & HAWKES, INC.
229 W. 28th St., 11th Fl.
New York, NY 10001
212-358-5300
Email: usrental@boosey.com
Web: boosey.com
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

BOURNE CO. MUSIC PUBLISHERS
5 W. 37th St.
New York, NY 10018
Fax: 212-391-4300
Email: info@bournemusic.com
Web: bournemusic.com
Styles: entire music spectrum
Published: Nat "King" Cole, Nas, the Rat Pack, Crazy Frog, Al Jolson, Rod Stewart, Barbra Streisand
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

BRENTWOOD BENSON
101 Winners Circle N.
Brentwood, TN 37027
800-846-7664 Ext. 2, 615-261-3300 Ext. 1
Web: brentwoodbenson.com
Styles: CCM, Gospel
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

BMG CHRYSALIS
BMG Chrysalis US
One Park Avenue
New York, NY 10016
212-561-3000
Email: Info.us@bmg.com
Web: bmg.com/us
Styles: all styles
Published: T-Bone Burnett, Snow Patrol, Ryan Adams, Wilco, Nick Cave & the Bad Seeds, Los Lobos, Iggy Pop, Pete Townshend, Spoon, the Guess Who, Talib Kweli, Calexico, Thievery Corporation, Corinne Bailey Rae, Jamie Foxx, M. Ward, Tegan and Sara, Sean Garrett, the Faint, Kings of Leon, Craig David, of Montreal, Lady Sovereign, John Prine, Ani DiFranco, Fischerspooner, the Estates of Willie Dixon, Muddy Waters, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Johnny Cash, Fred Ahlert, Del Shannon, Townes Van Zandt, Gram Parsons, Woody Guthrie, Badfinger
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

Additional locations:

Los Angeles
5670 Wilshire Blvd Suite 1400
323-969-0988
Email: info.us@bmg.com

Nashville
1 Music Circle South, Suite 500
Nashville, TN 37203
615-329-3999
Email: info.us@bmg.com

BUZZART ENTERPRISES, INC.
Santa Monica, CA
424-216-6105
Email: info@buzzartinc.com
Web: buzzartinc.com
Contact: Arthur Berggren
Styles: Rock
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

CASE ENTERTAINMENT/NEW PANTS PUBLISHING/OLD PANTS PUBLISHING
119 N. Wahsatch Ave.
Colorado Springs, CO. 80903
719-632-0227 Fax 719-634-2274
Email: rac@crlr.net
Web: oldpants.com, newpants.com
Contact: Robert Case
How to Submit: unsolicited material accepted. Call before sending demos.

CHASER MUSIC, ASCAP/BMI AND RIGHTTRACK MANAGEMENT
3927 Hemway Court-Penthouse
Santa Susana California 93063
805-200-9772
Contact: Alex B. Rosenthal aka Chase Williams
Instagram, Facebook
Email: ar.cw.917@gmail.com
Credits: ET, In the Heat of the Night, Police Academy, Big, Tuff Turf, Composer songwriter Malcolm Bruce and others
Song Placements, Television, Film and Cable licensing

CONCORD MUSIC PUBLISHING
5750 Wilshire Blvd. , Suite 450
Los Angeles, CA 90036
310-385-4455
Web: concord.com/music-publishing
How to Submit: no unsolicited material
Other locations in Nashville, New York, Miami, London, Berlin

CURB GROUP, THE
25 Music Sq. E.
Nashville, TN 37203
615-321-5080
Email: licensing@curb.com
Web: curb.com
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

DAVE TOUGH PRODUCTIONS
5801 Tee Pee Trace
Nashville, TN 37013
615-554-6693
Email: dave@davetough.com
Web: davetough.com
Styles: pop, hip-hop, country, roots-rock
Published: Matt Heinecke, Siop, Toni Arthur, Cindy Alter, Come & Go. Also operate publishing demo studios in Nashville and L.A

DEEP WELL RECORDS
1750 Vine St.
Los Angeles, CA 90028
Email: info@deepwellrecords.com
Web: deepwellrecords.com

DEFEND MUSIC, INC.
Los Angeles, CA 90012
323-305-7315
Email: russell@defendmusic.com
Web: defendmusic.com
Styles: all styles
Published: songs recorded by Sharon Jones & the Dap Kings, Kaskade, Robert Glasper Experiment, Eli Paperboy Reed

DELICIOUS VINYL
6607 W. Sunset Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90028
323-464-7467
Email: contact@deliciousvinyl.com
Web: deliciousvinyl.com
Styles: hip-hop, reggae, rock

DIMENSIONS GATE (BMI)
Cleopatra Records
11041 Santa Monica Blvd., Ste. 703
Los Angeles, CA 90025
310-477-4000
Web: cleopatrarecords.com, facebook.com/CleopatraRecords
Contact: Brian Perera
Published: Cleopatra Records artists only
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

DRAKE MUSIC GROUP
P.O Box 330939
Murfreesboro, TN 37133
615-297-4345
Web: petedrakemusic.com
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

EARWIG MUSIC COMPANY, INC.
2054 W. Farwell Ave., Garden Unit
Chicago, IL 60645-4963
773-262-0278
Email: info@earwigmusic.com
Web: earwigmusic.com
Contact: Michael Frank or Rita Warder
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

ECS PUBLISHING
1727 Larkin Williams Rd.
St. Louis, MO 63026
800-647-2117, 636-305-0100
Email: customerservice@canticledistributing.com
Web: ecspublishing.com
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

EMI CMG MUSIC
P.O. Box 5085
Brentwood, TN 37024
615-371-4400
Email: capitolCMGlicensing@umusic
Web: capitolcmgpublishing.com
Styles: CCM worship, gospel
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

EMI MUSIC PUBLISHING
(see SonyATV)

FIRSTCOM MUSIC
UNIVERSAL PRODUCTION
2110 Colorado Ave., Ste. 110
Santa Monica, CA 90404
310-865-4477
Email: info@firstcom.com
Web: universalproductionmusic.com/en-us/contact
How to Submit: Call before submitting material

HARRY WARREN ENTERTAINMENT
421 E. 6th Street, Suite 501B
Los Angeles, CA 900134
213-236-9222
Email: info@harrywarrenent.com
Web: harrywarrenent.com
Styles: standards, film music all styles (except country 1926-1960)
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

FUNZALO PUBLISHING
P.O. Box 2518
Agoura Hills, CA. 91376
818-578-8599
Email: funzalorecords@gmail.com
Web: funzalorecords.com
Contact: Dan Agnew
Styles: all styles
How to Submit: accepts unsolicited material, prefers CDs

GAMBLE-HUFF MUSIC
Philadelphia International Music
P.O. Box 128
Darby, PA 19023
610-583-8767
Email: chuck.gamble@warnerchappel.com
Web: gamble-huffmusic.com
Contact: Chuck Gamble

COMPILED BY ROBIN ROSE

Styles: R&B, jazz, soul
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

GENE AUTRY MUSIC GROUP, THE
WARNER CHAPPELL MUSIC
(Golden West Melodies, Gene Autry's Western Music Publishing, Ridgeway Music, Melody Ranch Music and the Gene Autry Music Company)
777 Santa Fe Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90021
310-441-8600
Web: geneautry.com
Published: Vintage music catalog

WORDS WEST LLC
GENERATION MUSIC, INC.
P.O. Box 15187
Beverly Hills, CA 90209
323-966-4433
Email: tony@wordswest.com, info@wordswest.com
Web: wordswest.com
Contact: Tony Gimbel, Managing Member Words West LLC/Tony Gimbel, President Generation Music, Inc.
Styles: all styles
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

GOODNIGHT KISS MUSIC / SCENE STEALER MUSIC
10153 1/2 Riverside Dr., Ste. 239
Toluca Lake, CA 91602
808-331-0707
Email: janetfisher@gmail.com
Web: goodnightkiss.com
Contact: Janet Fisher
Styles: all styles, especially master-quality hip tracks for film/TV
Published: '80s songs currently in film, ads and shows
How to Submit: online newsletter updates request monthly; subscribe at our website

HACATE ENTERTAINMENT GROUP
245 8th Ave., Ste. 869
New York, NY 10011
212-586-4229
Email: info@hacate.com
Web: hacate.com
How to Submit: We currently are not accepting any submissions

Additional location:

Headquarters - Oslo
Dronningens Gate 6
0152 OSLO Norway
+47-2242-0112

Hal Leonard Music
P.O. Box 13819
Milwaukee, WI 53213
414-774-3630
Web: halleonard.com
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

HARMONIOUS MUSIC
5062 Lankershim Bl. #174
N. Hollywood, CA 91601
818-569-3020
Email: jay@2activate.com
Contact: Madeleine Smith, Jay Arthur
Styles: urban, pop, club, rock, country and children's
How to Submit: soundcloud & You Tube links, easy to stream & listen (nothing to download), unsolicited material accepted

HARMONY ARTISTS
20501 Ventura Blvd, Suite 289
Woodland Hills, Ca 91364
323-655-5007 Fax 323-655-5154
Email: jross@harmonyartists.com
Web: harmonyartists.com
Contact: Jerry Ross
Styles: all
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

HEARYOU GLOBAL PUBLISHING
217 E. Poplar St.
Troy, KS 66087
800-756-6714
Email: christine.cochran@hearyoumusic.com
Web: hearyoumusic.com
Styles: All Styles
Published: Songs recorded by: Vanderberg, Jett Blakk, Long In The Tooth, Thought Penny, Through The Silence
How to Submit: email Christine.cochran@hearyoumusic.com (accepts unsolicited material)

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC COMPANY
35 W 45th Street, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10036
212-391-4200
Email: info@internationalmusicco.com
Web: internationalmusicco.com
Contact: Marco Berrocal
Styles: publishes classical sheet music
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

J.W. PEPPER & SON, INC
191 Sheree Blvd.
Exton, PA 19341
610-648-0500, 800-345-6296
Email: satisfaction@jwpepper.com
Web: jwpepper.com/sheet-music/welcome.jsp
Styles: concert band, marching band, orchestra, choral, piano
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

KREISELMAN MUSIC PUBLISHING
215 East 95th St., #30B
New York, NY 10128
917-847-6457
Email: adam@kreiselmanmusicpublishing.com
Web: kreiselmanmusicpublishing.com
Styles: ballads, jazz, blues, country, holiday songs, standards
Published: I publish the catalog of my late grandfather, Irving Weiser, a successful composer in the '40s and '50s.
Contact: Adam Kreiselman
How to Submit: email before submitting

LAKE TRANSFER MUSIC
11300 Hartland St.
North Hollywood, CA 91605
818-508-7158
Email: info@laketransfer.com
Web: laketransfer.com
Contact: Tina Antoine
Styles: alt. rock, hip-hop, Latin-pop
How to Submit: unsolicited material accepted

LANSDOWNE, WINSTON, BLOOR & HOFFMAN HOUSE MUSIC PUBLISHERS (LWBH) ASCAP/BMI
P.O. Box 1415
Burbank, CA 91507-1415
818-748-0001
Email: lynne@lwbhmusicpublishers.com
Web: lwbhmusicpublishers.com
Contact: Lynne Robin Green, President
Styles: all styles, except for hard rock/heavy metal. No middle of the road (MOR) pop or old-fashioned C&W songs. For film & TV submissions, musician/vocal pre-cleared masters only: enclose credits of artist as applicable.
How to Submit: We are not accepting any new material

LEIBER & STOLLER PUBLISHING
P.O. Box 11267
Marina del Rey, CA 90295
310-273-6401
Email: peter.stoller@leiberstoller.com
Web: leiberstoller.com

LOVECAT MUSIC
142 W. End Ave., #23W
New York, NY 10023
Email: lovecatmusic@gmail.com
Web: lovecatmusic.com, facebook.com/LoveCatMusic
Styles: all styles of vocal music
How to Submit: email to submit

MAKIN' MUSIC
2121 Fairfax Ave.
Nashville, TN 37212
615-292-7615
Email: makinmusicllc@gmail.com
Web: facebook.com/makinmusicLLC
Styles: country, radio promotion, marketing
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

MAYFLOWER MUSIC
P.O. Box 30122
Tucson, AZ 5751
520-326-4400
Email: celestial@harmonies.com
Web: harmonies.com
Styles: all styles
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

MEMORY LANE MUSIC GROUP
P.O. Box 254
Port Washington, NY 11050
212-460-8677
Email: info@memorylanemusicgroup.com
Web: memorylanemusicgroup.com
Contact: Mark Spier, Pres., CEO
Styles: standards, novelties
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

MIRACLE WORX MUSIC PUBLISHING
P.O. Box 955
Summerfield, NC
336-904-8347
Email: miracleworxmusic@gmail.com
Web: miracleworxmusic.com
Contact: Ken Gay, Jr.
Styles: Gospel, R&B/Soul, Pop, Blues
How to Submit: Send web links via email to your bio, music tracks, social media sites. No mail please

MOJO MUSIC MEDIA
437 E. Iris Dr.
Nashville, TN 37204
615-255-9837
Email: lee@mojomusicandmedia.com
Web: mojomusicandmedia.com
Styles: all styles
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

Additional locations:

Los Angeles
2355 Westwood Blvd, #1245
Los Angeles, CA 90025
310-213-6109
Contact: Matt Lilley
Email: clearance@mojomusicandmedia.com

MORAINE MUSIC
500 E. Iris Dr.
Nashville, TN 37204
615-383-0400
Email: info@morainemusic.com
Web: morainemusic.com
Styles: country, rock, blues, Americana
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

MORGAN MUSIC GROUP, INC
1800 Grand Ave.
Nashville, TN 37212
615-383-9029
Email: songmerch@aol.com
Contact: Dennis Morgan
Styles: pop, country, rock
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

MOUNTAIN APPLE COMPANY, THE
P.O. Box 22569
Honolulu, HI 96823
808-597-1888
Web: mountainapplecompany.com
Styles: Various types of Hawaiian and Polynesian music.
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

MPL MUSIC PUBLISHING
41 W. 54th St.
New York, NY 10019
Web: mplcommunications.com
Styles: all styles
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

MUSCLE SHOALS RECORDS / FAME MUSIC GROUP
603 E. Avalon Ave.
P.O. Box 2527
Muscle Shoals, AL 35662
256-381-0801
Email: info@famestudios.com
Web: fame2.com, fame2.com/submissions
Styles: country, R&B, soul
How to Submit: accepts unsolicited material, see web for details

MUSIC ROOM PUBLISHING GROUP, THE (ASCAP) / MRP MUSIC (BMI)
525 S. Francisca Ave.
Redondo Beach, CA 90277
310-316-4551
Email: mrp@aol.com, johnny@johnnyreed.com
Web: musicroomonline.com, musicroom.us, hollywood2you.tv
Contact: John Reed
Styles: rock, pop, film music
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

NEW HEIGHTS ENTERTAINMENT
New York City, Calabasas, CA
Email: info@newheightsent.com
Web: newheightsent.com
Styles: all styles
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

NORTH STAR MEDIA
3765 Wade St.
Los Angeles, CA 90066
818-766-2100, 818-766-2678
Email: pblair@northstarmedia.com
Web: northstarmedia.com
How to Submit: unsolicited material accepted

Additional location:

Michigan
40900 Woodward Ave., Ste. 350
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304
818-766-2100

OH BOY RECORDS
P.O. Box 15022
Nashville, TN 37215
615-742-1250
Email: info@ohboy.com
Web: ohboy.com
Published: see web
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

THE ORCHARD
(Sony Music Entertainment)
New York, United Kingdom
Web: theorchard.com

PEERMUSIC
901 W. Alameda Ave., Ste. 108
Burbank, CA 91506
818-480-7000
Email: losangeles@peermusic.com
Web: peermusic.com
Styles: all styles
Published: see web
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

Additional locations:

Corporate Office - Berkeley
2397 Shattuck Ave., Ste. 202
Berkeley, CA 94704
510-848-7337
Email: sfcorp@peermusic.com

Miami
5050 Biscayne Boulevard, Suite 104
Miami, FL 33137
Email: Miami@peermusic.com

Nashville
55 Music Sq. E. Ste. C
Nashville, TN 37203
Email: Nashville@peermusic.com

New York
152 West 57th Street
New York, NY 10107
Email: newyork@peermusic.com

PEN MUSIC GROUP, INC.
12456 Ventura Blvd., Ste. 3
Studio City, CA 91604-2484
818-766-9200
Email: michael@penmusic.com
Web: penmusic.com
Contact: Michael Eames, President
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

PRIMARY WAVE MUSIC PUBLISHING
116 E. 16th St., 9th Fl.
New York, NY 10003
212-661-6990 Fax 212-661-8890
Email: info@primarywavemusic.com
Web: primarywave.com
Styles: rock, pop

Additional location:

Los Angeles
2690 N Beachwood Drive, Floor 2
Los Angeles, CA 90068
424-239-1200

PRISM ESCAPE MUSIC
Penny Ln. Bldg.
215 E. 24th St., Ste. 221

New York, NY 10010
212-686-0902
Email: prismescape@gagorder.com
Web: gagorder.com
Contact: George A. Gesner
Styles: rock, pop, R&B, world, semi-classical, new age, alt. country, folk

REALSONGS
323-462-1709
Email: manthony@realsongs.com
Web: realsongs.com
Styles: pop, R&B, rock, country
How to Submit: no unsolicited material, publishes Diane Warren exclusively and does not sign outside songwriters.

RALEIGH MUSIC PUBLISHING
1411 Broadway, 4th Floor
New York, NY 10018
212-804-8181
Email: info@raleighmusicgroup.com
Web: raleighmusicgroup.com
Contact: Peter Raleigh, Steve Storch
All Styles: Heritage Catalog Admin, Pop, Hip-Hop, R&B, Rock, Alternative, One Stops
Notes: Elvis Presley, George Gershwin, Anthony Newley, America, PHresher, Muhammad Ali, Lords of the Underground, ISLAND, Lost Frequencies, Taylor Dayne, Randy Edelman

ROBBINS ENTERTAINMENT
333 Hudson St • Suite 506
New York, NY 10013
212-675-4321
Email: info@robbinsent.com
Web: robbinsent.com
Styles: dance
How to Submit: accepts unsolicited material, see "demos" section on web for full details

ROUND HILL MUSIC
818 18th Ave. S, Suite 940
Nashville, TN 37203
615-695-7705
Web: roundhillmusic.com
How to Submit: no unsolicited material

Additional locations:

New York
650 Fifth Avenue
Suite 1420
New York, NY 10019
212-380-0080

ROYALTY NETWORK, INC., THE
224 W 30th St, #1007
New York, NY 10001-1077
212-967-4300
Email: creative@roynet.com
Web: roynet.com
Styles: all styles
Published: M.O.P., Kelly Price, Dead Prez, Muggs (Cypress Hill), VHS or Beta
How to Submit: please contact prior to submitting

Additional location:

Studio City
12711 Ventura Blvd., #217
Studio City, CA 91604
818-862-0775

RYMATICA ENTERTAINMENT
P.O. Box 640337
Miami, FL 33164
786-354-1770
Email: richardjohn@rymatica.com
Web: rymatica.com
Contact: Richard John
Current Affiliate: ASCAP

SCHOTT MUSIC CORP. & EUROPEAN AMERICAN MUSIC DIST.
156 Fifth Ave., Suite 600
New York, NY 10010
212-461-6958
Email: Ny@schott-music.com
Web: eamdc.com
Styles: classical, pop
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The Basics of Mixing in Dolby Atmos (Part 2)

You've probably heard the buzz about Atmos, the new surround sound format from Dolby. As a music listener, to know Atmos is to love Atmos! But if you're interested in the technical side of sound engineering, you might have questions about mixing in this new 3D audio model. Following, studio owner and engineer Brad Smalling of Evergroove Studio in Evergreen, CO shares his perspective about taking the plunge into mixing in Atmos.

Music Connection: From an engineering standpoint, can you tell us how mixing in Atmos is different? What's your process?
Brad Smalling: It's different in that, initially, the setup is a little bit more difficult. It's not simply mixing inside of your favorite audio software like Pro Tools. You need an external renderer that takes all of this panning data—all of this metadata—and then turns it into Atmos for you. Dolby still very much recommends having a full speaker setup like we have here (Evergroove Studios) for QC and things like that. So, technically, getting it set up takes a few more steps. It's just not as easy as opening up a session and getting going.

Then once you get that going, it's initially intimidating. The first time I did an Atmos mix, it was intimidating, because you can put anything anywhere. So, like, where do I put the vocal? Where do I put other elements? So, the advice that I'd give to engineers, or people looking to get into Atmos, is go a little slow, and a little goes a long way.

In mixing for Atmos, it's good to remember that what we're calling the front wall—my left, center and right, which is in front of me—is still louder, and more "punchy" or "immediate," than sound behind us, which sounds more dull. So, you gotta kind of be careful about where you put your drums, where you put your lead vocal. These things are very important. So, in my workflow, the very first thing I start with is the vocal. When I'm placing the vocal, I just don't randomly put it in the center channel, or leave it on the front wall. I place the vocal where it feels good for the song—where the singer feels in front of me, feels very immediate—all of those things that we want the vocals to do.

So, for my workflow, I start with the vocal, I work towards the drums and the bass and establish a really good feel for that whole rhythm section vocal thing in the room. Then we can start adding guitars, keyboards, and other things in and around and start to really take advantage of this dome that we have.

MC: What about genres? Is Atmos good for any genre, or are certain ones better?
BS: I'm really glad you asked that because I've had so many artists say, "Well, but all I do is folk." We've mixed bluegrass, we've mixed indie folk, we've mixed hip-hop, reggaeton, pop, punk, adult contemporary, classical, straight rock. It is not genre specific. I will say the quality of recording matters more, because as you start to pull things out of the stereo field and into this dome, if anything isn't recorded very well, it will become pretty apparent very quickly. So, it's not genre-specific. It's up to your imagination.

"I do predict that stereo's gonna become the new mono. (Atmos) is just going to become the norm."

MC: In your opinion, why do you think artists and bands should consider getting tracks mixed in Dolby Atmos?
BS: I think artists should be mixing in Atmos. It's a new format that, honestly, has been a long time coming. So many times I've sat in this room and had an artist with a really creative idea, but until Atmos, all we had was left and right. They wanted an instrument to do a certain thing or pan a certain way or feel a certain way. Or a vocal to be very intimate, or a guitar to be very airy and floating. They use all of these terms, and I don't want to say it was hard to get there, but it always felt kind of compromised. You got there, but maybe you had a delay or a reverb or a way to do it.

Now (with Atmos), if someone wants an acoustic guitar to kind of float or feel light in a bridge or something, I can bring it off the front wall, and I can then lift it up, and I can have it feel like it's kind of floating above you. And the very cool thing about that is with binaural rerender (the headphone mix that Atmos delivers), the algorithm gives you front to back, up and down. So, you feel that in headphones, too. It gives a more immersive experience for your listener. It gives you a more creative outlet. At that point, the sky's the limit.

MC: Do you think that mixing in Atmos gives artists a competitive edge?
BS: Mm-hmm. Yeah, I think it will. It's just a matter of time. With Netflix now doing Atmos, Apple TV going toward Atmos, all these streaming services—I can't help but think the sync opportunities are going to be tremendous out of the gate.

(Atmos) already is the new standard. Apple and Dolby support it. The format change is here. Practically every new release you hear now is already in Atmos. I do predict that stereo's gonna become the new mono. (Atmos) is just going to become the norm. They're putting it into cars. It's suddenly everywhere. So, I say, get ahead of the wave now.

Check out the full video interview, including audio samples, here: youtu.be/_w60qkax_XE

Singer-songwriter **ANGELA PREDHOMME** is a contributing writer for *Music Connection*. Predhomme's music has been heard by millions through television, film, radio and streaming. Her songs have been featured in the popular Hallmark movie *Christmas on Honeysuckle Lane*, Lifetime's hit show *Dance Moms*, Freeform's *Switched at Birth*, commercials for ING Bank and Fiat, and more. Predhomme's award-winning songs have topped the Euro Indie and World Indie Music Charts, and she's been marked as "one to watch" by music journalists.

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